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Securitization in Yemen, 2000-2010: Shifting Geographies of Political Contention

Jennifer A. Bartmess

University of Colorado at Boulder, jbartmess@gmail.com

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SECURITIZATION IN YEMEN, 2000-2010:
SHIFTING GEOGRAPHIES OF POLITICAL CONTENTION

By

JENNIFER ANDREA BARTMESS

B.A., the University of Georgia, 2006

A thesis submitted to the
Faculty of the Graduate School of the
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This thesis entitled:
Securitization in Yemen, 2000-2010: Shifting Geographies of Political Contention

by Jennifer Andrea Bartmess
has been approved for the Department of Geography

John O'Loughlin

Najeeb Jan

John Willis

Date

The final copy of this thesis has been examined by the signatories, and we find that both the content and the form meet acceptable presentation standards of scholarly work in the above mentioned discipline.

ABSTRACT

Bartmess, Jennifer Andrea (MA, Geography Department)

Securitization in Yemen, 2000-2010: Shifting Geographies of Political Contention

Thesis directed by Professor John O'Loughlin

This thesis examines political conflict event data in Yemen from 2000-2010 to illustrate shifts in political contention and its effects on securitization in Yemen. It employs a geographic framework that interprets the influences of historical and geopolitical events on current political issues. It also critiques hegemonic discourse that underlies strategic and security reports. Methodologically, this thesis draws upon individual event data to illustrate the changes in type, scope, distribution, and severity of conflict in Yemen from 2000-2010. The conclusions assert that although terrorism was the main Yemeni issue of concern for the international community during those years, its impact on the Yemeni population was overshadowed by a growing opposition to the Saleh regime and by increasing regional conflicts that culminated in the Yemeni Spring of 2011.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACLED	Armed Conflict Location and Event Dataset
AQAP	Al-Qa'eda in the Arabian Peninsula (Yemen-based merger of al-Qa'eda)
GPC	General People's Congress, the dominant political party and that of President Ali Abdullah Saleh
GWOT	The Global War on Terrorism (informally, the WOT)
IMF	International Monetary Fund
PDRY	The People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (South Yemen, 1970-1990)
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
YAR	Yemeni Arab Republic (North Yemen, 1961-1990)
YSF	Yemeni Security Forces (including the police and military)
YSP	Yemeni Socialist Party, the dominant political party in South Yemen and the dominant proponent of the Southern Movement

Chapter One: Introduction

The diversity and challenges within the Yemeni state are often poorly represented. Terrorism emanating from within its borders and the 2011 political uprisings overshadow transformations of the Yemeni state in the previous decade that led to its current instability. The Yemeni state faces many contradictory pressures: it is a member of the Arab League but not of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC); it is a U.S. ally in the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) but this alliance has strained relations with other states in the region; and despite maintaining the highest poverty rates in the Middle East, large numbers of impoverished migrants from East Africa arrive on its shores. These issues exert pressure on a booming population, dwindling oil and water resources, and a government with limited reach and support. Regardless of the state's perpetual inability to provide for its citizens and numerous measurements that have led to its categorization as a failed state (Foreign Policy 2011), the topic of terrorism within its borders has eclipsed its internal challenges in international media from 2000 until the Yemeni Spring political upheaval in 2011.

The goal of this thesis is to identify ways in which notions of security have changed in a decade of Yemeni affairs from 2000-2010, from the onset of the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) to the Yemeni Spring. I focus on ways that political contention has shaped Yemeni society and governance, as well as on the effects discursive hegemony behind American-led counterterrorism efforts. I use the term “political contention” based on existing work in political mobilization studies that incorporates violent and non-violent movements, protest cycles, and revolutions. I focus on all these elements in a single thesis in order to unify disciplinary fragmentation that obscures the similarities and interconnectedness of related phenomena presented from different angles (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 1996).

During the eleven years of focus in this thesis (henceforth referred to as a decade), wars began in Afghanistan, Iraq, and worldwide in the American-led global war on terrorism (GWOT). Fears of an increase in terrorist activity became a reality. Within Yemen's borders, however, other issues are of greater consequence to the immediate population and to the regime: the Huthi rebellion in the North, which began in 2003, has claimed more lives than all other conflicts combined; a Southern secessionist movement gained steady support in the latter half of the decade; and approximately 300,000 migrants with few prospects arrived on Yemen's shores from the African horn since 2000 (UNHCR 2009). In this thesis I draw upon political contention event data from media reports to demonstrate that the Yemeni Spring of 2011 was not simply motivated by a wave of Arab uprisings, but had been fomenting—publicly and actively so—years before the international community paid heed.

I. Research Focus

In this thesis, I draw from events in media data from 2000-2010 to demonstrate how securitization and geopolitical activity has changed the trajectory of Yemeni state power. I analyze how counterterrorist policy related to the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) has affected Yemen's political climate, and how notions of security have differed between the priorities of local and foreign actors. I show how the changing notions of security have affected political contention, culminating in the Yemen Spring in 2011.

I focus on territory, space, place, network, and scale, as suggested by Agnew (2003b). Cox (2003) defines the most significant contributions of political geography as discussions about “territoriality as action to influence the content of an area; relation between people and their activities in particular, socially defined areas, and what lies beyond: a focus on exclusion, inclusion,

internal restructuring, and subsequent competitions and conflicts.” I focus on how local, national and global scales have affected, and have been affected by, Yemen’s political changes. The context I provide by using qualitative archival data helps to avoid falling into the “territorial trap” (Agnew 1994) that is so common in political science approaches that focus on country-wide data, and sets this project apart from a cartographic or quantitative study that might lack depth of qualitative detail. I also use quantitative data generated from media reports, which lends itself to identifying trends, and mapping changes in conflicts grants place specificity, while the qualitative data explains spatial relationships rather than relying upon spatially dependent data. Demonstrating Yemen’s position relative to the Arabian Peninsula, the African Horn, and the world hegemonic system illuminates Yemen’s position within networks of violence, resources, migration and economics.

My research began with an interest in the effects of U.S.-funded counterterrorist measures on Yemeni economy, politics, and society, and on how cooperation in the GWOT affected sovereignty and militarization of the Yemeni state. Questions that continued to guide my research illuminated different notions of “security”, from national to international to individual security. I view these questions from a perspective rooted in the tradition of critical geopolitics, which helps to reveal the impacts of national- and geo-politics on different Yemeni groups both within and outside of the political realm, from the regime to citizens to displaced populations. In this way I highlight Yemeni issues economically in the developing world, politically in the global system, and ideologically in Islamic tradition. This analysis especially points to the extent to which a prominent focus on counter-terrorism the past decade has overshadowed greater underlying instability in Yemen. As more and more attention is directed to securing the state, less attention is diverted to social implications of doing so. This thesis focuses on those social implications and unforeseen effects of increased militarization and security funding.

I present this thesis as a culmination of events before the Yemeni Spring of 2011, when mass protest against government authority gained enough traction for President ‘Ali ‘Abdullah Saleh¹ to agree to step down in the spring of 2012. He has since been voted out, likely to be replaced by his vice president after a single-candidate election. Although this thesis focuses on data before 2011, my hope is that it will highlight local, regional and international impacts on and contributions to the coming political changes in Yemen.

II. Research Outline

Following this introductory chapter is a literature review that demonstrates Yemen’s position in the world through three different types of space: policy spaces, perceptual spaces, and activity spaces (Murphy 2003). These perspectives are important for looking at historical trends because “how space is perceived can be as or more important than how it functions” (Murphy 2003, 51). These overlap with perspectives of place, space, and relations between scales that offer a well-rounded view of the realm of political geography (O’Loughlin and Raleigh, 2008).

I first focus on “policy spaces” in the literature review of Chapter Two, showing how political decisions have affected Yemen’s demographics, different brands of identity across regions within Yemen, modern political history, and Yemenis’ presence in the surrounding region. I then move to “perceptual space” that explores how policies are founded upon a range of ideologies that hold symbolic importance and meaning.

¹ I have attempted to maintain a consistent method of transliteration, though I preserve a few Anglicized spellings of Arabic words that have entered common English usage.

In Chapter Three, I discuss terrorism, counterterrorism, and social mobilization both in perceptual spaces and activity spaces. I identify multiple ideologies that contribute to perceptions of security and insecurity, as well as their impacts on policy and international relations. I also open a discussion of the perceptual spaces of mobilization of social movements. These perceptual spaces affect the “activity spaces” of security and economic policy that form the dominant “structures of inclusion” created by the dominant global economic and geopolitical systems (Flint 2003). This chapter situates activity within Yemen in the context of international affairs, and sets the background of Yemen’s role in a wider geopolitical world necessary for understanding the significance of the political event data of this thesis.

In Chapter Four, I present the methods and limitations of working with event data. I explain the methods used for coding data from media reports, and briefly discuss the studies on which I modeled this thesis, as well as deviations I took from their approaches. I present the assets and challenges of working with media reports, including how this may alter the presentation of data and locational representation of conflict. I also identify the categories of actors and types of conflicts that were the focus of the analyses in the following chapter.

In Chapter Five, I offer visual presentation in charts, graphs, and maps to accompany my analyses of the data. This chapter includes information on types of contention, from protests to battles, on locations of conflict, and on major events that corresponded with periods of contention, as well as my interpretations of the trends. Chapter Six provides concluding remarks and looks beyond 2010 to the future of al-Qa’eda in Yemen and the “Yemeni Spring”, its connection to the past decade, and to its potential effects on the future of the Yemeni state.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

I. Demographics, Political History, and Policy Spaces

Demographics

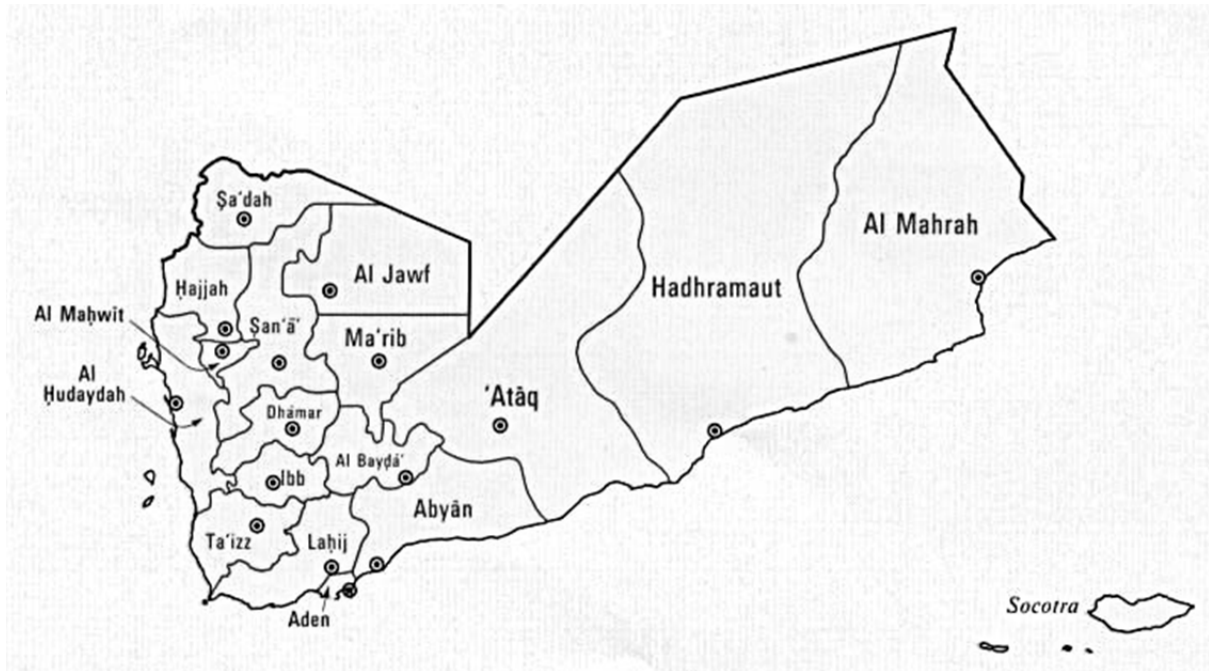
Descriptions of Yemen frequently regurgitate dismal socioeconomic statistics that paint a grim picture of its trajectory: “poverty and malnutrition have remained as high as or higher than they were a decade ago; education, health and other social services worse than a decade ago. Moreover, the once-promising middle class has been pauperized and has shrunk” (Burrowes and Kasper 2007, 263). For years, Yemen has ranked high on the Foreign Policy Index of Failed States: in 2011, it was listed as the thirteenth most fragile state in the world, steadily declining each year on the index from ranking twenty-first in 2008. Yemen maintains one of the lowest reported levels of human development (133rd on the UNDP Human Development Index in 2010). Nearly forty percent of the population is illiterate (UNDP 2009), and although education is nominally improving for men and women alike, prospects of utilizing this education to improve livelihoods are slim: nearly half the population lives on less than two dollars a day, and unemployment has hovered around thirty-five percent the entire decade from 2000-2010 (UNDP 2010). Yemen maintains one of the highest fertility rates in the world, though it has dropped sharply from 6.32 births per woman in 2007 to 4.7 in 2010 (UNDP 2010), but extreme hardships for women and mothers continue (Yemen ranked 161 of 164 countries in Save the Children’s Mother’s Index 2011). The return of Yemenis working abroad and the influx of migrants and refugees from the Horn of Africa add pressure to preexisting poverty and unemployment. Resource depletion is also looming and real concern. Some projections show that Yemen’s limited water and oil resources may run dry by 2025 if current rates of usage continue without improved efficiency and management (Naje 2010). Despite some rainfall in the

highlands and an annual monsoon season, pumping the deep aquifers has created estimates that 168 percent of Yemen's annual freshwater sources are currently being drawn (Al-Arashi 2011). With fuel shortages and high numbers displaced in 2011, Steil (2011) reports that enough water can neither be pumped from aquifers nor delivered to camps that have formed. Water prices have skyrocketed and that shortages are causing famine, deteriorating health conditions, and disease outbreaks.

Due to Yemen's low rates of human and economic development and general instability, neighboring states have not invited the country into the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) economic integration zone despite its geographic location, oil-based economy, and common cultural and historic ties to the region. Being denied membership in the GCC exacerbates Yemen's impoverishment: not only do trading, investment, and industry opportunities that GCC membership encourages bypass Yemen, but Yemen's economic growth appears to be slowing due to diminishing direct investment since it cannot compete with wealthier, neighboring countries. Lack of revenue further prevents it from developing infrastructure to encourage foreign investment. Individual poverty levels have continued to rise due to International Monetary Fund structural adjustment criteria in pursuit of Millennium Challenge Goals, which have forced the government to reduce subsidies on petroleum products and foodstuffs.

Despite the gravity of these socioeconomic figures, they nevertheless contribute to tabloid realism as a "reduction of the world into simple geographical categories and identities" (Dalby 2007, 296). These statistics situate Yemen in a helpless position without presenting links between the causes and effects of these grim reports, how they relate to globalization and modernity, and in what ways changes in the world system affect the Yemeni state. Generalizing statistics such as these ignore institutionalized structural violence that underlies power, policy, and inequality, and often surrounds discriminatory practices of classism, racism, or sexism.

Figure 2.1: Map of Yemen (Nations Online 2012)



Political History

The Zaydi imamate controlled the Northern regions of Sa'da, al-Jawf and 'Amran from the ninth century CE until 1962, though its control was not continuous. The Ottomans had technically ruled Yemen, though with a limited reach, from 1872 until 1910, when their empire began to crumble and finally dissolve in World War I (Farah 2002). The Ottomans and British had created a roughly delineated border between North and South Yemen in 1904. After the Ottoman Empire fell, the Zaydi imamate took over the Ottoman-controlled areas, and ruled a larger territory than before, making them a Shi'a minority in the Sunni state. In the South, the British had gained interest in Yemen with the desire to control the water passage from the Mediterranean to their Indian colony. After a failed attempt at securing a port in al-Makha, soldiers of the British East India

Company gained control in Aden in 1839 (Farah 2002), which became a key port for British Petroleum tankers.

The wealth of coastal Yemen depended upon ship traffic, and after the Suez Canal opened in 1869, Aden became the second busiest port in the world only to Hong Kong (International Crisis Group 2011). Since then, the port's wealth and importance in world trade have steadily declined due to a number of technological and political changes. Canal closures during the Suez crisis in 1956 and several times in the 1960s and 1970s halted traffic. Improved fuel efficiency reduced the need for ships to refuel in Aden, and ships too large for the Suez Canal began again to travel around the Cape of Good Hope. Increased investment to build new quays and improve the capacity for manufacturing output in the late 1980s increased Aden's shipping traffic for a decade.

The United States began to refuel ships in Aden in 1997 after a suspension of several decades because of a combination of operational needs and U.S. engagement policy with Yemen (Alexander and Richards 2009). It replaced Djibouti as the primary US Navy bunker in 1999 (Alexander and Richards 2009). The Al-Qa'eda suicide bombing of the *USS Cole* battleship in the port of Aden in 2000 was a direct response to this increased engagement, and caused insurance rates to skyrocket, making Yemeni ports undesirable to foreign shipping (World Port Source 2012). Refueling in other Yemeni ports became even more undesirable after French oil tanker *Limburg* off the coast of al-Shihr in Hadramawt in 2003. Avoiding Somali piracy in the past decade has additionally redirected approximately ten percent of ships around the Cape (World Port Source 2012). The growth of terrorism and internal political unrest has greatly reduced foreign investment and tourism, two major opportunities for economic growth.

The political changes in North and South Yemen during the 1960s resulted from decades of unrest, failed coup attempts on the imamate in the North, and in-fighting against British colonialism

in the South. Even though the revolutions of North Yemen in 1962 and of South Yemen in 1967 were based on different political motives, targeted different enemies, and produced different results, they were nevertheless deeply intertwined with one another.

Former South Yemen contains a majority Sunni population and was brought under British influence with the goal of securing the colony of Aden after its occupation in 1839. Outside Aden, the Southern hinterland was divided into the Eastern and Western protectorates, but the British only directly controlled Aden rather than hoping for an expansive colony. British colonization brought Aden contact with British India and international sea trade. Among the cosmopolitan population, however, colonial bureaucrats and Indian merchants handled most affairs, relegating Yemenis to the lowest social class (Schmitz 2001). Nevertheless, the Yemenis in Aden adopted a superior attitude to the powerful shaykhs and sultans from the hinterland, whom they considered to be backwards, savage and barbaric (Lackner 1985). When the rest of the South organized to overthrow British rule in 1967, some Adenis proposed for Aden to become an independent merchant city statelet similar to the status of Singapore in order to retain relationships with foreign investors and capital flows (Lackner 1985, and Ismael and Ismael 1986).

Until 1948, the North Yemeni Imam Yahya Hamid al-Din upheld staunch isolationism that prevented development or communications with the outside world. When his son, Ahmed, became Imam, he cautiously opened the state to foreign influence. A “social revolution” ensued, introducing technologies such as electricity and communications infrastructure that began a slow but drastic transformation of Yemeni society. Better infrastructure allowed the transportation of goods and ideas to far-reaching areas of the state; new factories opened where women worked alongside men; foreign capital and investment began to enter the country; and foreign relations became important in Yemeni government policy (Zabarah 1984).

The Cold War marked the importance of Yemen's strategic location, as the USSR and USA both competed for influence and an alliance with the state positioned alongside the important Bab al Mandeb chokepoint, important for controlling transport vessels travelling to and from the Suez Canal. Both the Soviets and the Americans attempted to maintain friendly relations with Aden, an important refueling stop for oil tankers and warships. To this day, some claim that "The U.S. is interested in Yemen solely for its strategic location," (Walker 2012) especially because keeping the Bab al Mandeb open ensures Europe quick access to Middle Eastern oil.

Cold War superpowers began to compete for influence in Yemen in efforts to secure a strategic ally. In the South, the Soviet Union granted military and economic resources and constructed a port in al-Hudaydah (see *Figure 2.1*) to "offset American and Western economic aid" granted to North Yemen under the conservative imamate (Zabarah 1984, 78). The Soviets offered economic and technical assistance while the Chinese and Americans constructed infrastructure in equal measure. Both North and South Yemen began adeptly procuring politically motivated foreign aid from Egyptians, Chinese, Soviets, British and Americans.

Hopes for an anti-colonial, anti-imamate United Democratic Yemen were strengthened by the pan-Arabism that encouraged Arab nationalism and solidarity and which was promoted by Egypt's President Gamal 'Abdul Nasser in the 1950s (Stookey 1982). Goals for pan-Arabism provided a strong incentive for Nasser to gain support in Yemen. In 1955, Imam Ahmad signed a solidarity pact with Nasser and King Sa'ud of Saudi Arabia that enabled Egyptian military instruction and training for Yemeni soldiers. Ahmed then enacted a reform that raised the salary of military officers in an attempt to ingratiate him to them, but a reversal of the reform sparked the Zaydi soldiers to form the "Free Yemeni Officers" movement (Douglas 1987). Meanwhile, infrastructure improvement and increased capital had enabled a wealthy merchant class to emerge that was able to

send sons abroad, typically to Egypt, for education, where many were inspired by Egypt's revolution of 1952 that overthrew the monarchy and reforms instated by Nasser (Drysdale and Blake 2005). This merchant class contributed funds and munitions to the Free Yemeni Officers, who led two assassination attempts against Imam Ahmad in the next five years and in 1962 succeeded in a coup d'état that deposed the imamate (Stookey 1978).

In the revolution following the imam's assassination, foreign powers continued to compete for influence. Saudi Arabia, with British support, backed the royalists due to the fear that the revolution would spread across its borders and threaten public support of the Saudi monarchical system. Egypt, with Soviet support, backed the republicans. Britain encouraged Southerners—namely rural tribal shaykhs—to support the royalists in the North (Halliday 1990) so that Britain's position as a colonial power would also not be threatened by revolutionary fervor and calls for independence. The victorious revolutionaries (though only due to a military stalemate allowing the republic to survive) were the first group with the momentum to reorganize Yemeni society, encourage innovation, and shift the locus of authority to a democratic system of rule.

Revolution in the North encouraged revolution in the South. Thousands of Southerners moved northward to support the new Yemeni Arab Republic (YAR) after the fall of the imamate (Lackner 1985 and Dresch 1989), and began to discuss alternatives to the political situation under British occupation in the South. Calls for unification emerged after the fall of the imamate, but disunity rested upon a history of ethnic tension: “British protection was preferred as it brought subsidies rather than taxation, and the tribesmen resented the Zaydi habit of treating the Shafais [sic] as a subject race” (Bidwell 1983, 104).

In the South, the government's struggle to make South Yemen into a Marxist state gained momentum after the Northern revolution. Sensing unrest, in 1962 the British announced their

planned departure from South Yemen for 1967. Regardless, Southerners formed a National Liberation Army (NLA) with Egyptian and North Yemeni support to expedite the British departure, but NLA victory did not prevent a bloody civil war in the South between emergent socialist, Nasserite pan-Arabist, and unionist political parties vying to seize influence in a newly independent state. Five years later, the NLA stepped into power after Southern independence and after the defeat of the Aden-based Front for the Liberation of Occupied South Yemen (FLOSY) (Lackner 1985). The Southern revolution at the time was portrayed as a war against colonialism, which reaped the benefits of general collective action despite specific conflicting interests, but the revolution did not occur behind such a uniform ideology. Using terms such as “Marxism” and “anti-colonialism” to describe the revolution in the South simplifies motives and obscures the complicated course of events that occurred before and during the actual revolution (Dresch 2000). Despite its relative wealth and cosmopolitan influences from foreign trade and expatriate remittances, the withdrawal of the British and their subsidies, compounded by reduced shipping traffic because of the closure of the Suez Canal during and after the Six Day War, left the Adeni economy in dire conditions (Dresch 2000).

Only afterwards was the revolution lauded as a class struggle with the aim of social revolution: “the total transformation of society, the elimination of tribalism as a political and social phenomenon and the marginalisation of Islam” (Ismail 2000, 21). Although South Yemen gained independence in 1967, it did not officially become a one-party Marxist state until 1970, when the economy was nationalized and South Arabia was renamed the People’s Democratic of the Republic of Yemen (PDRY).

After the revolutions in Yemen’s North and South, both regimes remained unstable and competing factions within each state continued to fight for internal legitimacy. In the North, neither the royalists nor the republicans had gained a clear victory, but both agreed upon a reconciliation in

1970 (Drysedale and Blake 2005). The YAR changed hands six times until Ali Abdullah Saleh seized power in 1978 by gathering support of Islamists and granting the most powerful Bakil and Hashid tribal coalition leaders powerful political positions throughout his rule in exchange for their loyalty (Schmitz 2011). “This arrangement brought stability, but stunted state expansion: in return for their allegiance, the shaykhs expected free reign on their own turf” (Ismail 2000, 20). Nevertheless, the alliance between the Hashid paramount shaykh ‘Abdullah al-Ahmar and Saleh (of the Sanhan clan, part of the Hashid tribal confederation) was the lynchpin of political stability in the North throughout the 1980s.

Despite border skirmishes and strained relations, promises of unification of the YAR and PDRY continued during ceasefires throughout the 1970s. Public support for unity was strong, assuming it would usher in political openness, multi-party politics and democratic elections after a “transition period” (Ismail 2000, 26). Economically, remittance rates in both North and South Yemen in the 1980s were lower than during the height of the 1970s oil construction boom in the Persian Gulf. Oil had been found in the border region, necessitating an agreement for both North and South to reap the income. But both North and South demanded dominance in political activity, which obstructed prospects for unity.

Unification of North and South Yemen in 1990 was more of a merger of the two states than appropriation of the South by the North, because both states were politically weak (Carapico 1993). The Southern State had all but crumbled after a bloody civil war in 1986. When the Soviet Union collapsed, the political ideology backing Marxist South Yemen also appeared obsolete and lost support of the population. Saleh became the head of the newly unified state, and the power center of the country was kept in Sana’a, the former Northern capital. The union was tenuous, however, and many Southerners complained about unfair distributions of wealth, of oil concessions, and

general discrimination by Northerners. The Southern government had expected to participate as an equal in a unified state, but became subordinate to Northern rule, which created tension that remains today.

Several political parties in both the North and the South have dissolved or surfaced since unification, but the most prominent General People's Congress in the North and the Yemeni Socialist Party in the South remain two of the most supported political parties. The prominent political parties in Yemen as of 2011 (collected from Fanack 2012 and Library of Congress 2008) are:

Table 2.1: Political Parties of Yemen

Party	Main Position	Representation
General People's Congress (GPC)	Saleh's ruling party; no clear ideology	Dominant party before Yemen Spring
The Yemeni Congregation for Reform (Islah)	Islamist Reform, Salafist	Formed oppositional coalition in 2005 as the Joint Meeting Parties (JMP)
Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP) (named the National Liberation Front prior to 1978)	Southern Movement Supporters; socialist (formerly Marxist-Leninist ruling party of South Yemen)	
Others: The Popular Forces Union Party, Arab Socialist Baath Party, Nasserite Unionist Party, Hizb al-Haqq (Zaydi anti-Imamate Party)		

A violent civil war erupted in 1994 after a standoff between North and South when Southerners demanded that the GPC relinquish its monopolization of power. Rather than a clear war between Northern and Southern troops, it soon “descended into something more closely resembling an armed free-for-all, with a host of regular and irregular actors involved on both sides” (Ismail 2000, 40). Saleh brought in as many as 60,000 irregular fighting forces from the Hashid tribes and recruited veteran mujahideen and dissident Islamists who were hostile to Socialism (Ismail

2000). Saleh also received financial and military backing from Saudi Arabia. All these elements ensured Northern victory.

Despite a quick victory for Northern troops, the war has had lasting repercussions on North/South relations. The Northern regime removed Southerners from military, civil and government service, and although agreeing to pay severance salaries for some time, left Southerners with little hope of reemployment, especially with any government posts in Sana'a. The reasons for Southern opposition to Northern rule in 1990 and 1994 have retained weight and leverage within the fledgling democratic system. Many Southerners accused the North of diverting the South's "allegedly more secular and open culture through a dual-pronged strategy of re-tribalisation and Islamisation" (International Crisis Group 2011, 5).

The General People's Congress (GPC), with Saleh the head of the political party, maintained complicated relationships with the diverse constituency of the Yemeni population. After the civil war, Northern military forces patrolled Southern regions that posed threats to the regime, and Southerners were longer eligible for public sector work or in the military forces. In the first parliamentary elections in 1993 before the 1994 Civil War broke out, neither the GPC, Islah, nor the Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP) won the majority, but the GPC votes were enough to situate Saleh as president for the transition period. The civil war, however, destabilized the political influence in the South; even though the YSP still remained the prominent political party, leftist publications went out of business as the GPC closed leftist printing presses and arrested oppositional (Ismail 2000).

The Islamist political party Islah, many members of whom had supported Saleh's continuation of power after the 1990 unification because they opposed secular Socialist leadership in the South, emerged as an opposition party in 1997 (International Crisis Group 2011). After the civil war had essentially eliminated the power of the YSP, Islah and the GPC competed for power in an increasingly one-party state. In the 1997 parliamentary elections, the GPC won over two-thirds of

the vote, essentially allowing it to pass legislation unopposed (Gray 1998). The first presidential elections did not take place until 1999, when Saleh won over ninety-five percent of the vote against his only opponent, who was also from the GPC (Gray 1998); he marked 1999 as the starting point for his first term in office under the new state democratic system, despite having held power since 1978. In 2006, parliament extended the presidential and parliamentary terms two years each, which would have allowed Saleh to stay in power until 2013 had the Yemeni Spring not demanded his departure.

Unification led to reintegration with U.S.-led global economy, when the PDRY was removed from the U.S. State Department terrorist list because it ceased to exist (Carapico 2000). Structural adjustment beginning in 1996 with IMF reform led to privatization that created more dependence on meager oil exports rather than encouraging long-term investment and diversification. As the Yemeni GDP rose from 2000-2010 from increased oil exports, the Yemeni economy became dependent on erratic fluctuations in oil prices. As a result, the global financial crisis in 2009 directly affected Yemeni economy (al-Arashi 2011).

Yemen in the Region

At first glance, Yemen appears as an anomaly in the region. It is the most impoverished state in the Arabian Peninsula, but borders two states (Saudi Arabia and Oman) whose economies reap enormous profit from oil exports (though Oman's wealth pales in comparison to Saudi GNP and the GDP/GNP of nearby Persian Gulf countries). Although oil revenue comprised one-third of Yemen's GDP at peak production, its oil resources and GDP are a mere fraction of the neighboring

Arab Gulf states'.² Looking beyond the Arabian Peninsula, however, Yemen's socioeconomics are significantly more similar to nearby countries in the Horn of Africa, which lie less than forty miles across the Bab al-Mandeb strait of the Red Sea at the narrowest point.³ Yemen's patterns of uneven democratization, semi-autonomous regions emerging beyond the government's purview, and fragile unity follow more closely the political instability of countries in the Horn of Africa. Using a perspective of a "Bab al-Mandeb" or Red Sea region, rather than viewing Yemen only as part of the Arabian Peninsula region, offers insight into the challenges the Yemeni regime faces.

Yemen's physical environment can be divided into three broad categories: the temperate highlands, the Eastern desert, and the low coastal areas (known as the *Tihama* along the Red Sea). The interior of the former Yemeni Arab Republic (YAR, or former North Yemen) is mountainous, terraced for agricultural production with villages perched atop hills for fortification. The "hinterland" referred to the large area of former South Yemen beyond the protectorate of Aden that was affiliated with British rule during colonialism. Its terrain is mostly arid desert of the Empty Quarter, which stretches from the coastal areas to the Northeastern border with Saudi Arabia and the border with Oman. The entire Southern coast of the Arabian Sea fell inside the borders of South Yemen, leaving none of its governorates land-locked. The border between North and South was divided at the mountainous interior, and left former North Yemen in control of the Red Sea coastline.

The modern state is divided into governorates with predominantly rural populations with the exception of those in the capital Sana'a and those in the former South Yemeni capital of Aden. The

² In 2010, Saudi Arabia's GDP was valued at 15,836 USD; Oman's at 20,791; and Yemen's at 1,437 (UN 2012).

³ For comparison, Djibouti's GDP in 2010 was USD 1,283, Eritrea's 429 and Yemen's 1,437. (UN 2012).

Northern and Western governorates, especially those of Sa'da and al-Jawf, house majority Zaydi populations, with Sa'da the center of Zaydism. Since 2004 the Zaydi Huthi family in those northern governorates has fought an intermittent civil war with the national security forces in an attempt to maintain autonomy and religious freedom in part of the ancient Zaydi territory. Not all Zaydi Shi'a belong to the Huthi family, significantly the Zaydi in Northern regions outside of Sa'ada and parts of al-Jawf.

The Huthi family aligns with predominant Zaydi thought before a scholarly divide within Zaydism in the eighteenth century, when Zaydi scholar Muhammad bin 'Ali al-Shawkani offered much more open interpretations to Sunni Islam and Sunni reformism (Eagle 2004). The Huthi family is now a minority traditional Zaydi and claim direct descendancy from the Prophet Mohammad as *sayyids* and reject the illegitimate rule of contemporary Yemen. The split in Zaydism underpins other religious divides in Yemen, although the Sunni-Shi'a divide has become more acrimonious in recent years, especially in accusations that the Huthi have received Iranian assistance in the war against Yemeni central authority (McGregor 2005). Al-Qa'eda has made threats against, and has been suspected of attacks on, the Shi'a minority because the Huthi conflict has resulted in so many Sunni deaths (al-Rodaini 2011) and resists Sunni reformism. The Huthi are related in these complex ways to ideas of securitization within Yemen, and the geography of rebellion aligns with the geography of religion in ways that are obscured by assuming a sectarian divide between Shi'a and Sunni.

Hadramawt, the largest governorate in the former South, is the location of most (but not all) of the country's oil production. Support of the unified state varies among the governorates, largely polarized by uneven benefits of unification in 1990. The governorates of Abyan, Hadramawt and Shabwa benefitted from Northern rule because of oil extraction made possible after unification

ended border disputes surrounding oil deposits, but Ad-Dhali' and Lahej in particular suffered from rising unemployment and poverty after unification, and became the heart of a Southern secessionist movement.

Yemen's visibility in the region is strongest in its legacy of migrants to surrounding wealthier states, reaching back to the Hadrami diaspora across the Indian Ocean to the South China Sea since the sixteenth century (Ho 2006). Over a million Yemenis worked in the Persian Gulf after the 1973 OPEC embargo that enabled a construction boom on the Arabian Peninsula. They supported a strong remittance economy that improved many household poverty levels, though the stagnation in the mid-1980s forced the transition to an oil-dependent economy (al-Arashi 2011). In the 1980s, many of these migrants traveled further afield to volunteer for the mujahideen in Afghanistan. (Healy and Hill (2010) estimate that at least 1,000 have returned to Yemen. Martin (2010) estimates that 3,000 Yemenis fought for the mujahideen.) Their return to Yemen added to the already high rates of unemployment. Today, the number of Yemenis abroad is estimated at six to seven million, with four to five million in Indonesia alone, 800,000 in the GCC, and 200,000 in Africa, and remittances, though much lower than in the 1970s, still contribute a substantial portion to Yemen's GDP (International Monetary Fund 2001).

Yemenis abroad were drastically affected by the Yemeni government's response to the Gulf War in 1991. GCC States had contributed troops to restrain Iraq's advances into Kuwait, but the Yemeni government's refusal to do so despite its large military exhibited tacit approval of Saddam Hussein's advances. As a result, the United States withdrew its foreign aid to Yemen and Saudi Arabia alone expelled an estimated 800,000 Yemeni migrant workers within a matter of weeks (al-Arashi 2011). (Steil 2011 estimates that nearly two million Yemeni workers expelled from the entire Persian Gulf region in 1990.) This reduced of remittances to Yemen from migrant workers by a

third, or five hundred million dollars annually (Steil 2011), which had comprised the bulk of Yemen's GNP at the time. A general trend of urban migration and the decline in the agricultural economy led per capita income to fall by 46% in the next three years despite increasing oil revenues. Increased relative poverty to the previous decade led to widespread protest in the early years of unification (Gray 1998).

The returned Yemenis added to already high unemployment, but further straining the Yemeni economy has been an influx of new arrivals of East African migrants and refugees, mostly Somalis and Ethiopians. Yemen had long relations of intermarriage with Abyssinian and Ethiopian peoples and in trade of coffee and *qat*, a stimulant leaf commonly chewed in Yemen, Ethiopia and Kenya, but modern day movement across the Red Sea is most often due to Yemen's signature on the United Nations Refugee Convention in 1951. It was the only Arab state to sign, and as a result East African asylum seekers are granted immediate legal rights and refugee protections on a *prima facie* basis once they set foot on Yemeni soil (UNHCR 2012). Signing the 1951 Refugee Convention has had far more consequences than the government expected at the time. Civil wars, strife and famine have pushed more and more East Africans—particularly Somalis—across the Red Sea.

In recent decades, these refugees and asylum seekers came to Yemen due to the comparative ease of crossing close borders to Persian Gulf states for finding work opportunities, but tightening the overland borders to curb terrorist movement since 2001 and the instatement of a Yemeni coast guard after the *Limburg* bombing in 2003 have greatly reduced this possibility. Yemeni and East African men alike now remain in Yemen, unable to find migrant labor (Healy and Hill 2010). This has exacerbated unemployment and poverty, has diminished the government's willingness to accept migrants, and has reduced the capabilities of providing aid. The UNHCR reports 610,000 East Africans in Yemen (UNHCR 2012), but the government claims that the number including

undocumented migrants is closer to two million (Healy and Hill 2010). Immigrants have been labeled as a security threat and are blamed for bringing crime, prostitution, and sexually transmitted diseases in to Yemen (especially HIV) to Yemen, and are so marginalized that they have little control over their representation and rights in Yemen (Morris 2009). Hundreds of Ethiopians who are considered illegal immigrants not ensured entry by the 1951 UN Refugee Convention have been deported since 2006 (Roble 2010). More than contributing to security threats, the immigrants are affected by security measures in Yemen, often under the auspices of counterterrorism. In 2011, Yemeni authorities sought to end the automatic asylum granted to Somali refugees, threatening deportation of any unregistered refugees, though this has not yet changed any legislation regarding refugee rights.

II. Identity and Perceptual Spaces

Statistics of Yemen's development and economic trends fail to show how these relate to Yemeni identity and changes in the country and a larger world and regional system. Perceptions of Yemeni identity and the role of Yemen in a wider setting are important aspects to balance understanding development statistics. Identification with clans and tribes complicates and informs political arrangements and party loyalty. Perceptions of dignity, obligation, and tribal relations informs an understanding of Yemeni politics, changing alliances, and strength of political contention beyond assuming rational decisions that ignore human agency.

Yemen's regions have retained much of their same diversity and relative autonomy as prior to modern statehood. Before the revolutions in 1962 and 1967 that created the modern North and

South Yemeni states, the northern theocracy under the Zaydi imamate was little concerned about a national identity that reached across the entire territory of present-day Yemen, and British colonialists encouraged tribal dependency on colonial rule rather than allowing a cohesive identity to form in the South. Zaydism did, however, extend beyond tribal divisions, and gave a framework for tribal relations especially in the North (Dresch 1989). The Federation of South Arabia formed in 1959, which enabled some cohesion as a Southern state, but encouraged pluralities in the Southern tribal areas. In both the North and in the South, “the revolution was neither a mass movement nor homogenous” (Stookey 1978, 230).

Like today, Yemen’s tribal system was the strongest unit of organization (especially in the North), but usually far removed from political matters in urban centers. Rarely united in political motives, the tribes were one of the many factions competing for influence in the future of Yemeni politics, if they were involved in the politics of state’s central authority at all. Even after the revolutions in North and South Yemen in the 1960s, Saudi Arabia and the USSR arguably held more sway over economic conditions in the two countries, and influenced the political economy more than did the national rulers of the newly independent states (Schmitz 2001). In both the North and the South, tribes and rural populations, regardless of lineage and class, were encouraged by Saudi cash to fight for the royalist cause.

Perhaps to an even greater extent in the South, the revolution represented the interests only of the few in urban centers. Many tribes avoided participating in the revolution since neither an independent state nor British colonial rule interfered with their livelihoods, and were satisfied to wait and join the ranks with whichever victor succeeded. “To avoid becoming too closely involved in the struggle between feudalism and Arab socialism, and while both extremes are represented by minority groups which would like to come out firmly on one side or the other, the great majority hold no

strong views... and are not much concerned which side comes out on top so long as they themselves do not suffer in the process” (Dresch 2000, 112).

Yemen’s diversity during the revolution period fell along similar geographic lines as today, but these boundaries were by no means exclusive. Reliance on these sectarian divisions should be avoided, since most Zaydis, especially those in Northern tribes, had little connection to the imamate (Stookey 1978). Although pro-imamate royalists were predominantly Zaydi Shi’a, many non-Zaydi Sunni also supported the imam. Likewise, the revolutionary republicans were funded largely by Sunni mercantile trades-unionists, yet it was the Zaydi officers disillusioned with Imam Ahmad’s rule who created the “Free Yemeni Officers” who assassinated him. Despite the revolution’s success after years of coup d’état attempts, the revolution was neither a mass movement comprising the majority of the Northern population, nor did the participants hold homogeneous claims and interests (Stookey 1978, 230).

Tribal affiliation in Yemen remains the strongest measure of identity in Yemen, though a nationalist character has emerged especially with increased schooling. Government-standardized textbooks that present a unified view of the national history, a republican anthem, and saluting the flag have become part of the curriculum even in rural and tribal areas (Dresch 1989). Tribal relations with the current central government vary, typically effected by previous degrees of tribal independence and relationships with outside authority. Attempts to encourage national identity were lacking until the revolutions of 1962 and 1967 (Schmitz 2001), and even today the diverse constituents of the Yemeni population tend to value other levels of identity over a national one. Tribal society, however, can provide a “potential complement to that of the unitary state and not simply a residue” (Dresch 1989: 395) and are not isolated in traditions of history antithetical to a modern state. For this reason, Yemeni politics are impossible to view from a national scale, since

neither unified civic nor ethnic identities exist on a large scale, and “‘transnational’ politics and economics are more the historic norm in Yemen than the nation state” (Schmitz 2001, 83).

Tribal relations are complex and confederations form between clans with similar political goals. The groupings of tribes are loose and do not resemble a “command structure”; rather, power lies in those who can rally tribesmen around immediate circumstances of importance. “Yemen's tribesmen are individuals first, concerned with their own honor and survival: If their neighbor is gaining influence, they will look for anybody who can help restore the relative balance of power, regardless of politics or ideology” (Schmitz 2011, 1).

The level of political participation and activism in Yemeni civil society, including tribal areas, exhibits a degree of democratic practices beyond state politics (Wedeen 2008). This lies in contrast to the typical portrayal of Yemen’s internal politics as chaotic, resting upon ever-changing tribal vendettas where violence reigns supreme over order. Yemen’s tribal areas are often described as “lawless” (see Ryan 2007; Abdul-Ahad 2011; USA Today 2011; and France24 International News 2010 to name but a few) but mistakenly so: “Tribal society is regulated by complex rules that bind its members to one another. Mechanisms to maintain a level of stability are intricate and function on the central premise that every individual has an obligation to maintain that stability” (Phillips 2010, 9). These mechanisms can fail, sparking sometimes generations-long tribal feuds perpetuated by revenge killings, but referring to tribal areas as “ungoverned” spaces overlooks the durability of tribal organization.

Since tribes in the Ma’rib and al-Jawf hinterland are underrepresented in the federal government, they have achieved leverage and influence over government decisions by other means, most notoriously by kidnapping foreign tourists to use as bargaining chips to free tribal members from prison sentences. In 2005, for example, three Austrian tourists were kidnapped by the al-Jizah

tribe in Ma'rib to force the government to release a brother of a kidnapper and two other tribe members, who had been arrested on two months prior. Typical of scant media reporting, the Associated Press Worldstream identified the arrests on charges of stealing a car (Al Haj 2005), while the Deutsche Presse-Agentur (2005a.) alleged that the tribesmen were arrested “at Sana'a Airport after arriving from Syria and were suspected of having fought alongside insurgents in Iraq.” Regardless, the kidnappers were released 2 days after the kidnapping, though the media coverage was unclear if the kidnappers' demands were met.

Because of the lack of national-level recognition of tribal grievances and the frequent arrests of clan members, this systematic method of gaining government attention is far from “anarchic” or “lawless”; rather, it demonstrates an effective response to the lack of political representation and a form of local political activity that has emerged in tribal coalitions (Hinnebusch 1999).

Interference by non-tribal actors threatens the stability of these tribal mechanisms. Attempts by outsiders to increase government presence, encourage national identity over tribal identity, or promote different codes of conduct or religious foundations such as Salafism, upset the balance of tribal relations. Yet maintaining tribal support has remained a key element in retaining central governing power. The most powerful tribes today remain the Bakil and Hashid confederations in the North, who supported Saleh's rise to power in 1978 and whose irregular fighting forces ensured that he stayed in power. In the 1994 Civil War, Saleh brought in Hashid tribes of as many as 60,000 men (Ismail 2000, 40) in the civil war. He gained support of this confederation in large part due to the funding and munitions granted to them in exchange for loyalty. Many of the munitions used in the war remained in tribes' hands, granting them a much stronger coercive threat than they previously wielded, and the government's limited reach and resources has since not been able to diminish the strength of tribal confederations. Rather than minimizing tribal power, the ruling party instead

attempted to work alongside the tribes. The retraction of Saleh's support from the al-Ahmar family, (the late 'Abdullah al-Ahmar had led the Hashid tribal confederation from 1960 until his death in 2007) whose influence had been crucial in securing the power of Saleh in 1978, was perhaps the most significant event in 2011 that broke Saleh's ability to maintain his legitimacy as president (Johnson 2011). 'Abdullah's oldest son succeeded him, and along with his other brothers fought directly against the Saleh regime in 2011. Two were members of parliament (one the deputy speaker), and openly declared support for the protesters in 2011, inciting a wave of defections from the Saleh camp (Johnson 2011).

Chapter Three: Points of Contention

I. Perceptual Spaces of Security, Insecurity, and Geopolitics

Security in American policy, as according to the U.S. National Security Council Reports of 2002, 2006, and 2010, has included ample focus not only on military operations in counterterrorism operations, but also on economic security in the technological age of globalization, in securing resources and energy, and in “winning hearts and minds” by securing human rights and freedoms. A new age of geopolitics had emerged (Agnew 2003a), one that was remapping the geopolitical terrain along with the restructuring of a transnational global economy and “globalization” abetted by technological advances and no clear obstructions to U.S. hegemony in the post-Cold War era (Agnew 2003a). The 2002 National Security Council reported that failed states had become larger threats than conquering ones, identifying the greatest threats to U.S. national security as emanating from “territories marked by state failure, insurgent militias, sectionalized politics, and contraband capitalism” (Ó Tuathail 2010, 256). The main points of focus throughout the tradition of Western classical geopolitics had not changed, and the fundamentals were still taken for granted: inter-state relations were still referencing the world as a whole; the focus relied upon a totalizing, generalizing view produced by those with political prominence and power; and territorial actors played the exclusive role in world politics, following the lead of Great Powers (Agnew 2003a).

The 2002 National Security Report not only set out GWOT goals that promoted U.S. national and homeland security, but also defended the pursuit of that security by whatever means necessary so long as they supported a “just” cause. It mobilized terrorist threats for political purposes, and openly supported preemptive attacks and internments in defense that countering

terrorism in the world was inherently just and protective of the world's interests at large. Written in it is the following statement that defended the upcoming Iraq War:

The United States has long maintained the option of preemptive actions to counter a sufficient threat to our national security. The greater the threat, the greater is the risk of inaction— and the more compelling the case for taking anticipatory action to defend ourselves, even if uncertainty remains as to the time and place of the enemy's attack. To forestall or prevent such hostile acts by our adversaries, the United States will, if necessary, act preemptively (National Security Strategy 2002, 15).

The strategic geography behind the GWOT tactical efforts in the name of security drew from a firm entrenchment in classical Western geopolitics. Strategic geography typically combines traits of physical terrain, security, and economics, and “refers to the control of, or access to, spatial areas (land water and air, including outer space) that has an impact—either positive or negative—on the security and economic prosperity of nations” (Kemp and Harkavy 1997, 8). Energy security—vital to global economy, sense of entitlement to oil and gas reserves is implicit in the discussion of the region for those who state “the fact that the greater Middle East remains a vital strategic prize” (Kemp and Harkavy 1997, 155).

Technology and resources are of particular prominence in this realm of strategic geography, though political ideologies and population dynamics are also taken into account, which provides a somewhat superficial view of human geographic factors of interest in strategic geography. Politically geographic control and organization of territory (including people and assets), economic geography infrastructure that contributes to the economy of a region, and military geography concerns of deployment and power projection are all considered when furthering a strategic agenda (Kemp and Harkavy 1997, 8-9). Lengths of borders, proximity of major cities to borders (which indicates vulnerability to conventional ground assault, or “strategic depth”), road and rail network

accessibility, mountains and rivers that prevent lines of advances, and weather patterns are all elements of physical geography that are important to take into account for military strategists.

The strategic assets of the Middle East have long been a point of focus for foreign superpowers, leading Cohen (1963) to identify the Middle East as a “shatterbelt” during the Cold War. After the Cold War, this has remained the case as foreign countries compete for influence in the GWOT and for the area’s oil and gas reserves. Growing energy needs in China and India worry policymakers in Washington about access to foreign oil; the Bab al-Mandeb and Strait of Hormuz remain strategic chokepoints for shipping and access; and even after the Cold War, the U.S. prioritizes its military base interests as access to the region and reminiscent of Cold War containment policies (see Kaplan 2009 and Morrissey 2009). O’Loughlin and Raleigh (2008, 497) identify the following criteria for shatterbelt regions, in which the Middle East still clearly fits: its regional position has become globally significant in battling terrorism and tempering Islamic fundamentalism; its ethnic diversity has been wrought with division and fragmentation, and foreign powers continue to intervene for their own security and geopolitical interests.

Strategic geographers (such as Kemp and Harkavy 1997) tend to discuss historical conflicts and emerging challenges and threats, while failing to question how the historical context, the current context, and the rest of the world perpetuate conflict. Kaplan (2009) places enormous importance on physical geography, stating that physical geography determines conflict, success, and failure in the global system. He stands behind a deterministic view guiding a realist approach to international affairs. This reliance on classical geopolitical thought greatly limits the depth of analysis of contemporary issues and projections for the future, and discourages portrayals of the Middle East as anything but a powder keg trapped amidst sectarian conflict, encouraging prejudiced opinions among those not wary of such rhetoric. Geographic determinism as promoted by Kaplan (2009) is

met with damning critiques by many geographers: Toal (2009) points out the inseparability of human-environment relations; Caryl (2009) reminds us that geography changes; and Kearns (2009) blames environmental determinism for reducing “complex theories of economic development or of international relations to a stable set of factors so that the primary causes of social, political, and economic inequality lie outside the realm of human intervention.”

The foreign influence commonplace in shatterbelt regions exacerbates Yemeni instability in particular: “Evidence demonstrates that security-oriented policies pursued by foreign actors can weaken state control over certain populations and territories. These policies also seem to have contributed to reversing the democratization processes that were initiated in Yemen after unification and diverted state attention from much-needed domestic reforms” (Bonnefoy and Detalle 2010, 123). Despite geopolitically motivated foreign intervention in Yemen during the Cold War and since the start of the GWOT, Yemen’s closer socioeconomic and political proximity to countries in the Horn of Africa than those in the rest of the Middle East prevents wholeheartedly embracing Yemen’s position fit into this general shatterbelt theory.

Those who recognize the U.S. as the world hegemon after the end of the Cold War often place the responsibility on it of being a guarantor of world peace. The rhetoric of the 2002 U.S. National Security Committee report relied on moral imperatives, economic development, and security all in the name of freedom. “we will not hesitate to act alone, if necessary, to exercise our right of self-defense by acting preemptively against such terrorists” (National Security Strategy 2002, 6). But Lang (2008) stresses that the U.S. reliance on the self-defense argument to legitimate its punitive measures abroad has worked against its favor. Rather than acting as the world leader to expand the established tactics of “just war” to the modern technological changes, U.S. warfare since emerging as the victor in the Cold War has become more asymmetrical as its military strength

compared to the military strength of countries where it has been at war. Military actions have been increasingly based on its own unilateral decisions rather than on the agreement of an international community, and due to their severity in response. Gregory (2010) identifies two new modes of war that have emerged since the end of the Cold War: that of advanced state militaries with highly specialized technology in stripped-down approaches, versus that of non-state forces, guerilla and improvised warfare, and criminal circuits. Countering the threats of the latter, activities of the United States military forces, in a supremely more advanced position militarily, “contain within them a punitive ethos, but that ethos has come dangerously close to vengeance” (Lang 2008, 493). As a result, current American counter-terrorism policy, especially in instances of abuse of that power, has created even more injustice and violence in the international system.

The overt moral superiority in U.S. counterterrorist rhetoric has created a language that “precisely enabled the other – the ‘unlawful combatant’, the ‘militant’, the ‘insurgent’ – to be placed beyond redemption, beyond the human, in what Gregory (2004, after Agamben 2005) calls the space of the exception” (Driver 2005, 353). From this hegemonic position, the 2002 U.S. National Security report used a rhetorical strategy that assumed the wishes of “every person, in every society” (National Security Strategy 2002, iv), presupposing that all “freedom-loving people” would collectively support the coming war, “united by common dangers of terrorist violence and chaos” (National Security Strategy 2002, iv). Rhetorically, U.S. warfare is presented to the public as “surgical, sensitive and scrupulous,” whereas non-state militaries and guerilla forces are presented “indiscriminate, callous and predatory. In practice, however, each bleeds into the other, so that it becomes necessary to expose the continuing horror of wars waged by the global North” (Gregory 2010, 154). The self-righteous tone of American ideals leadership in the geopolitical order presents American ideals of human dignity and economic development through free markets and trade

worldwide as the only moral and rational choices possible for peace and prosperity for all peoples of the world.

Flint and Taylor (2007) call attention to how the language of those with the upper hand in power (especially in labeling actors as friends, enemies, failed, or anti-American, etc.) drives foreign policy. The construction of images used in foreign policy making is itself a key geopolitical act. Rhetorical strategies of labeling countries that served as allies in the GWOT as friends, versus rogue states who do not, set the context for the U.S. to assume a position of defining norms of behavior and policing the global community. States pursuing other forms of socio-economic organization outside this structure were deemed as threats and oppositional to global prosperity and the peace that would follow (Klare 1995).

The portrayal of places in academic, media and policy circles is crucial to aspects of their development and inclusion in the world system. The labels that policymakers place on regimes affect U.S. political, military, and development policy decisions toward those countries, as well as public support behind such policies. Luyendijk cautions accepting these terms without consideration of the geopolitical power behind them, and in a pertinent example, he points out that “There are never anti-Arab presidents in the White House but many anti-American leaders in the Arab world” (Joris Luyendijk quoted from interview with Kester 2008, 502).

This is of particular importance in Yemen, where the state’s limited reach has only been one variable in control over the civic sphere (Ismail 2000, 17), but its label as a failing state has affected its relationship with U.S. foreign policy. As a “failing” and insecure state allying with the U.S. in the GWOT, the Yemeni regime had few options other than to comply with U.S. development schemes, counterterrorist operations, and as the GWOT evolved, with ensuing military operations on Yemeni

soil. The U.S. as the global hegemon has clearly had the upper hand in determining the course of “securing” Yemen, though not without economic and development incentives.

Once only a humanitarian concern, “failed statehood” has moved from something seen as a drain on military and economic resources to a security concern. (Ryan 2007). Supporting failed states has become a booming business in the development sector, which has witnessed a proliferation of funding allocated to capacity building and good governance programs. In 1997, President Saleh even admitted that Yemen “was being managed, not ruled” (Kostiner 1997, 665). As for “capacity building” that these decisions have promoted, WikiLeaks cables from 2009 and 2010 revealed that President Saleh had agreed to American air strikes against al-Qa’eda suspects on Yemeni soil under the condition that he could claim the raids as his own. This demonstrated the alleged capacity of the Yemeni security forces (YSF) under the Saleh regime to secure its territory, and Saleh admitted lying to parliament to deter public criticism of Yemen operating as a U.S. puppet regime (Wikileaks cable 2010). In this same meeting, Saleh opted for the use of U.S. fixed-wing bombers circling outside Yemeni territory, to engage in AQAP targets only when sufficient intelligence became available, after voicing the concern of the inaccuracy of cruise missiles that had led to civilian casualties in 2009.

The tactical shifts practiced in a war against terror rather than against state actors represent a shift in traditional notions of sovereignty. The proliferation of labeling countries as failed, failing or fragile advocates an idea that some states are not legitimate sovereign authorities when they neither upholds citizens’ rights, nor hold a monopoly of power within their territory. Where a state fails to uphold its obligations to act for the population, terrorist organizations may proliferate as a challenge to state authority.

The use of unmanned aircraft has allowed the U.S. to target these terrorist organizations on foreign soil while circumventing a sovereign, effectively allowing the U.S. to carry out war

operations in a country without being at war with that country. Using unmanned aerial vehicles (“drones”, or “predator drones”) in warfare presents challenges to rules and precedents in warfare, as well as to international relations, which between the U.S. and Pakistani relations have been severely strained by this issue, though predator drone attacks continue despite disputes (Mazzetti and Schmitt 2010). Due to a loophole in the U.S. legal system where the president must only rely upon congressional rulings when sending *troops* into battle, drone bombings have remained largely hidden from the public eye. Since no troops are at risk, approving drone attacks can bypass the War Powers Resolution that requires congressional notification of military operations within 48 hours and approval within 60 days; instead, “more than seven years after it began, there has not even been a single vote for or against it” (Singer 2012). The Long War Journal estimates that drone attacks in Pakistan increased from five in 2007 to 117 in 2010 (Roggio and Mayer 2012). The 288 reported drone strikes in northwest Pakistan since 2004 have killed approximately 2100 individuals, with the non-militant fatality rate since 2004 approximately seventeen percent (Counterterrorism Strategy Initiative 2012). After initial airstrikes in Yemen in 2002, drone attacks appear to have been infrequent and kept quiet until 2010 (Cole 2012), when an anonymous source leaked information to the New York Times about the killing of terrorist proponent Anwar al-Awlaki. Wikileaks cables in 2010 revealed that Saleh had been allowing U.S. airstrikes on Yemeni soil under the condition that he called them his own (Shane 2010a; Wikileaks 2010). Data of the numbers of U.S. drone attacks and casualties in Yemen are not available comparably to the attacks in Pakistan, though a military campaign has greatly expanded since 2009 (Gorman and Entous 2011).

The backlash from both neoliberal and neoconservative views firmly entrenched in the tradition of Western classical geopolitics that have guided the geopolitical trajectory of political geography research has prompted political geographers to pursue a critical approach (Dalby 1997, Ó Tuathail 1996). Critical geopolitics encourages questioning the role of the state, its sovereignty, the

power it holds over its territory, and its role in international relations and in the world system. It also encourages the deconstruction of text, images, and rhetoric to expose the “homogenizing, downscaling anti-geographical qualities of this prevailing mode of geopolitical discourse” (Ó Tuathail 2010, 257). Identifying the power dynamics behind global politics, superpowers, strategic goals and implications, supports the claim that “the geopolitical vision is never innocent” (Kearns 2003, 174). Geopolitical explanations of the world contain inherent security, political, and strategic implications of foreign interests that alter the geopolitical landscape and shape political realities that affect international policy. The powerful geopolitical discourse behind the GWOT polarized and downscaled international affairs into “a martial struggle between antagonistic camps” (Ó Tuathail 2010, 256). Similarly, critical security studies have emerged to open a discussion of what security means to different people across space and time. Most critical security studies literature rejects realism and focuses on the moral dimension and human agency required in security policy.

Critical Security Studies literature (see Booth 2005 and Krause and Williams 1997) emerged to challenge the hegemonic worldview that emerged after World War II to consider what security means to those without power. The economics and strategy discussed in the U.S. National Security Reports of 2002, 2006, and 2010, have been the successful elements of “security” in U.S. operations in Afghanistan, Iraq, and elsewhere in foreign policy. Even though human dignity, freedom, democracy and justice have been prevalent in the rhetoric, the implications of security strategic and economic security efforts on the population have in most cases backfired: counterterrorism aid has enabled authoritarian regimes to extend their reaches, economic policy has increased levels of poverty and income disparity, and human insecurity has only increased in areas that have faced far lengthier wars than expected. The U.S. National Security Report of 2006 championed replacing the leaders in Afghanistan and Iraq by democratic regimes, presupposing that the will of the people would follow when democratic governance took hold. But the trajectory created a different future in

which embitterment against American intervention has spread. The Arab Spring revolutions have shown that democratically elected leaders may have no interest in following a liberal American model of the state. The 2011 parliamentary elections in Egypt after the ousting of former president Hosni Mubarak granted the Muslim Brotherhood's Freedom and Justice Party nearly half the seats, and the hardline Salafi Islamist Nour party nearly a quarter (BBC 2012). The popularity of Islamist and conservative groups worries many American conservatives who once championed democratic expansion, since the ascendancy of these groups into power does not guarantee cooperation with U.S. security or other strategic support.

Critical geopolitics and critical security studies have been critiqued for their persistence in focusing on the state scale and macro-levels of analysis, and for the inability to produce a more alternative, geographic form of geopolitics that disaggregates the homogeneity perpetuated in classical geopolitics and therefore localizes global analyses (Ó Tuathail 2010). Viewing geopolitics through the state as an actor simplifies the evolving world system. Gilmartin and Kofman (2004) warn that political geography research falls short in granting sufficient attention to the persistence of differences of power and wealth. These differences conceal uneven development, underdevelopment, and structural violence that occur both beyond and within the state scale. Less of an emphasis on elites and the history they create encourages the recognition of the gendering of geopolitics (Gilmartin and Kofman 2004). A gendered focus of security allows a critique of power dynamics inherent in deciding whose security matters the most, and provides insight into the insecurity facing most vulnerable populations with the least ability to voice them (see Dalby 1997, Hudson 2005, and Hyndman 2001). Focusing on the scale of the individual focuses political imperatives beyond the scope of state-scale initiatives to consider individuals' access to food, water, land, education and health care, and protection from violence motivated by sexism and racism (Flint and Taylor, 2007). The concept of human security responds to classical geopolitical notions of

security that focus on level of the state and its relations with other states as the driver for international relations, by suggesting that security should also be defined at the individual and community level.

II. Activity Spaces of Terrorism, Counterterrorism, and Mobilization

The Emergence of Terrorism in Yemen

Since the Global War on Terror (GWOT) began in 2001, terrorism emanating from Yemen-based fundamentalist groups turned from a fear to a reality. Al-Qa'eda influence in Yemen and Saudi Arabia was strong throughout the decade, but the formal group of al-Qa'eda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) did not form until 2009. Before AQAP's establishment, militants (such as those in the Aden-Abyan Islamic Army and in the Jund al-Yemen brigade) who claimed to have committed several high-profile terrorist acts likely had al-Qa'eda connections. The specific bombing of the U.S. warship *USS Cole*, en route to Iraq but refueling in Aden in 2000, was conducted to condemn increased American presence in Iraq that was aided by Yemen in providing refueling stops, but was part of a wider response to increased American engagement with Yemen after decisions in 1997 to make Aden a primary Navy bunker. A prior threat to bomb an American ship refueling surfaced in intelligence reports in 1997 (Alexander and Richardson 2009). The differences in aims and membership in groups that commit terrorist acts, such as the Aden-Abyan Islamic Army and in the Jund al-Yemen Brigade, have tended to blur and overlap, perhaps contributing to the belief that each was stronger than in reality. Of the different groups in Yemen that support terrorism and Islamic extremism, all have ties to the jihad network, but Osama bin Laden was not necessarily

the figurehead of the Aden-Abyan Islamic Army or Jund al-Yemen Brigade, or other Yemeni extremist groups (Carapico 2000) before the explicit formation of AQAP in 2009.

Terrorism has proliferated in the disenfranchised South, where unemployment remained high after the 1994 Civil War and where returned fighters from Afghanistan promoted fundamentalist religious practices. The failure of the Marxist state's socialist project paired with new rule by the North left most Southerners unsatisfied with their leadership. General dissidence toward the Northern regime and foreign influence appealed not only to religious ultra-conservatives and deposed aristocrats, but also echoed frustrations of Southerners in general, including right-wingers, liberals, socialists, and social conservatives (Carapico 2000). Al-Qa'eda has provided just one avenue for expressing these groups' grievances, but other outlets for objection have been offered by participation in an active secular secessionist movement or in guerrilla militias like the Aden-Abyan Islamic Army.

The established branches of AQAP that have emerged in Yemen's desert areas cannot be explained simply as the result of terrorists filling a vacuum of power in distant "lawless" regions outside the purview of government authority. AQAP has in large part seen success in Yemen due to al-Qa'eda's ability to capitalize on tribes' distrust of the state (Phillips 2010 and O'Neill 2009). AQAP has utilized tribal codes of honor in order to establish bases in tribal areas, creating a client relationship that "hinges on a tenet of Yemeni tribal culture: Honor requires providing hospitality to an outsider who requests protection, and turning over someone who has sought protection is shameful" (Dresch 1989, 64–5). Phillips (2010) identifies specific instances when al-Qa'eda has called upon tribal honor to protect its presence in tribal areas. "The tenth edition of Sada al-Malahim [al-Qa'eda's online newspaper], extolled the duty of shaykhs to give sanctuary to the mujahideen, referencing a story of how tribes offered sanctuary to the Prophet during a crisis. Given the cultural

imperatives and the relative inexpense of offering refuge, a tribe's provision of sanctuary does not necessarily mean it would support a more aggressive phase of the mujahideens' work" (Phillips 2010, 6).

Although AQAP has successfully established itself and expanded in remote tribal regions of West and South Yemen (airstrikes and drone attacks have been conducted in Hadramawt and Abyan governorates), many (such as Katz 2003 and Zabarah 1984) allude to the tribes as fickle, quick to double-cross allies if the price is right. Despite receiving assistance and in turn harboring terrorist actors, assuming a longstanding tribal-AQAP alliance is premature: "Al-Qa'eda is merely the most recent in a string of 'friends' who have supported these tribes against the government" (Katz 2003, 40). Phillips (2010) suggests that AQAP's relationship with tribes is fragile and may sour as al-Qa'eda's domestic political ambitions threaten tribal strength and influence. Threatening the tribes' mechanisms that settle conflict and maintain order will also likely encourage tribal resistance to AQAP presence. AQAP has already deterred tribal support when directing violence against civilians of tribes (Phillips 2010), when vying for more power than tribes over society, or when demanding that religious law extend above the tribal system. Social responsibility in a tribe extends far beyond religious ideology (Phillips 2010), and al-Qa'eda goals to create a united Islamic community are at odds with tribal interest in maintaining autonomy from central authority. As long as tribes maintain a tribal identity that is stronger than a national one, they will support whichever entity offers them the most support, al-Qa'eda or otherwise. "They are not naïve enough to think that they would fare any better if Yemen ever fell under the rule of al-Qa'eda" (Katz 2003, 41).

Forging a relationship with terrorist networks that threaten the regime has come with a price. Receiving support from terrorist groups can strengthen tribal resistance to the central government, but as terrorism has increased in Yemen, the government has cracked down on its response to the

kidnappings so frequently used as a tribal bargaining mechanism. Now, any kidnappers are immediately labeled as terrorists (al-Omari 2010). and since 2008 face capital punishment if charged (al-Maqtari 2009). Although tribal kidnappings may have become more routinely violent of their own accord as extremism became a more common response to grievances and as terrorism became more commonplace, severe punishments have ended an era of tribal kidnappings as leverage.

The U.S. - Yemeni Counterterrorism Alliance

The United States declared the GWOT as a response to the attacks of September 11, 2001 with the intention of forestalling, preventing, and defeating al-Qa'eda threats worldwide (National Security Strategy 2002). Under mounting pressure from the U.S. to comply with securitization practices after scrutiny for the high-profile terrorist attacks on the *USS Cole* in Aden, President Saleh agreed to act as an ally in the GWOT along with leaders of Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates, among others. The consequences of the expulsion of Yemeni migrant workers from Persian Gulf states and the withdrawal of U.S. aid in 1999 provided a warning of risking Yemen's relations with its donor countries again, and additional economic incentives made an alliance with the U.S. particularly appealing. The U.S. granted aid towards tightening Yemen's borders and training military forces, expanding military aid from just over four million USD in 2006 to more than sixty-six million USD in 2009 (Terrill 2011, 70). Aid from the Millennium Challenge Goals also hinged upon compliance, good governance and upholding security measures. Additionally, port traffic in Aden was slow (largely due to high insurance rates for shipping through the port after al-Qa'eda bombings), and many Yemeni officials welcomed US Navy visits to the under-utilized but world-class port because of the potential for economic growth (Carapico 2000). Despite economic incentives, counterterrorism at the forefront of international relations in the

GWOT reshaped the practices of development organizations and the distribution of humanitarian aid.

Reliance on foreign aid had increased in Yemen since the 1995 “bitter austerity package recommended by the IMF” (Carapico 2000) was enacted to bring Yemen’s economy to a functional level for participation in international finance. The IMF regulations had not reduced high unemployment rates or poverty levels, which stayed steady despite moderate economic growth, in part due to the booming population. From the outset of the Yemeni-U.S. counterterrorism alliance, funding was redirected in the name of transparency and cooperation (often directed to capacity building to strengthen state control) and incorporated into neoliberal policy goals. Loose links between religion and terrorism, economics and security allowed the war on terror to be redefined as an ideological war with the intent of diffusing freedom and democracy globally (via force or otherwise), and to preemptively push these goals beyond responses to specific acts of violence.

This rhetoric allowed U.S. foreign policy to push an agenda of promoting democracy and neoliberalism as essential means for defeating the root causes of terrorism (Blakely 2009) in a way that drew together both neoliberal and neoconservative policy goals rather than pitting them against one another as extremes. Neoliberal economic policy encouraged a specific type of economic development that satisfied neoconservative methods for countering threats to national security (see King and Murray 2002, 585).

Neoconservative approaches to American national security identify threats as emanating from the countries that refused to develop or globalize. Barnett (2003) differentiates rogue states which do not prioritize globalization from the “functioning Core” of countries that functioned in the global system. This, according to him, creates a “non-integrating Gap” that must be aggressively shrunk by Core countries and global powers. In the Gap, disconnectedness defined danger, and war

tactics such as torture and extensive imprisonment without trial, are viable when necessary to furthering that aim, as Barnett (2002) stated that “when we cross over into the Gap, we enter a different rule sets universe.” This tone of ethical duty, creates “moral economies” that can justify atrocities that include warfare in the names of justice and humanitarian good, but “the only difference is that today liberals who engage in this justification think they are different because [they think they are] morally advanced” (Asad 2007, 4). These moral economies as justifications for war are formulated from a subjective moral position of global and economic powers, who may deem what is cruel and what is necessary and decide how to deal with threats and implement policy to deal with them.

The ideas reflect the neoconservative “structures of inclusion” in the contemporary world: the capitalist world economy and the geopolitical system of states (Klare 1995). Economics and geopolitical strategy could be conjoined under the term of “security”, in which countries who did not comply presented threats to a global system. Neoliberal economic policy works within the political climate of neoconservatism by expounding the virtues of free markets, openness, and global economic integration, with military-enforced security if need be. U.S. security interests can be promoted while simultaneously providing a “universalizing and homogenizing discourse of neo-liberalism that centralizes and standardizes truth around a limiting number of objectives – privatization, the prioritizing of market forces, individualism, and the commoditization of social life” (Slater 2003, 75-76). This neoconservative position is summarized as follows:

There are parts of the world where US hegemony does not currently prevail but where hard power has to be brought to bear in order to prevent possible future military threats from materializing, secure fundamental resources for the world economy, and eliminate rulers who refuse to play by the rules as laid down under the current hegemony (Agnew 2005, 24).

Any non-globalizer may in this way be identified as a threat, possibly warranting military intervention. The push for global integration in the world market echoes classical geopolitical perspectives of territorially distinct and sovereign nation-states in competition that will allow global powers to dominate weaker states by maintaining a globally recognized economic advantage. Roberts, Secor, and Sparke (2004) critique this globalist and economic view as one that justifies war-mongering in terms of globalization.

Simplistic explanations for terrorist motivation and simplified analysis of Yemen's "insecurity" provide justification for neoliberal economic reform, and this neoliberal approach is useful in redefining situations as "problems" that economic reform can fix. In the case of USAID, the necessary combination of security and humanitarian goals are explicit. Its goals for much of the decade have been similar to these stated in 2005:

USAID's overall goal in Yemen is to support US government [USG] foreign policy objectives in the war on terrorism by helping to develop a healthy and educated population with access to diverse economic opportunities...the USG's foreign policy objectives in Yemen are to expand the USG and Yemen's government partnership against terrorism, the neutralize al-Qaida's ability to threaten US interests both inside and from Yemen, and to enhance regional security by building a close partnership between the US and [the] Yemeni military (USAID 2005).

As a result, U.S. foreign aid allotment to Yemen became contingent upon cooperation in the GWOT. Some caution that rather than encouraging more transparent democratization and fairer economic practices, the effects of this type of development has created a "sociopolitical context of structural adjustment in a country such as Yemen [that] ensures the worst possible results of free markets in a sea of market imperfections (barriers to entry and competition such as red tape, institutional fragility, cronyism, corruption, risk aversion)" (Fergany 2007, 6). But to some,

“America seems to value stability [such as market flows and compliance] rather than democracy” (Ignatieff 2003, 5).

These “worst possible results” of promoting a free market are particularly likely in Yemen, a state that operates under extreme levels of corruption, maintains weak conflict resolution mechanisms, falls short of holding authority over its territory, exhibits low or restricted political participation, and allows for human rights violations (Bonnefoy and Detalle 2010). Counterterrorism aid expanded the Yemeni government’s capacity to police its territory, inciting criticism for using counterterrorist aid in order to reduce its own threats. Since terrorism has become a catch-all phrase that conflates all violent actions of non-state actors against unarmed civilians or the state under one umbrella term, the lines between terrorism and revolution or secession could be blurred to make a case for using counterterrorist funding towards mitigating actions against government authority. Yemenis have been wary of counterterrorist support that has strengthened the regime, summarized by a Yemeni political science professor,

We are afraid that the government is going to use this aid ... against the opposition, against, you know, innocent people and not against al-Qaida...So again, the Yemeni government needs the aid, definitely. But it also needs someone to watch out for what it does (anonymous from McEvers 2010).

In providing counter-terrorism assistance, Carapico (as quoted in Ryan 2007) warns that although the United States “wanted the Yemeni government to arrest enemies of America, the Yemeni government wanted to arrest its own enemies” (Ryan 2007, 56). Using anti-terrorism rhetoric to pursue its own aims has inflamed anti-government sentiment, but still frequently appears in unsubstantiated claims, such as when the government clashes with tribes in the name of counter-terrorist operations (International Crisis Group 2003).

Rules of war, ideas of “just war”, international law, and the projection of power and just causes in the GWOT rest upon these Eurocentric outlooks, necessarily presenting dynamics of geopolitical power. International law “addresses us all as if we were military strategists” (Orford 2010, 339) and uses calculations to determine the legitimacy of dual use targets whereby civilian deaths are necessary collateral of attacking a strategic target. Increased research and design of military equipment and strategies has allowed for more deliberately targeted killings including the use of smaller and more accurate bombs to reduce collateral in the name of humanitarianism. Many argue that this allows for a “more humane” form of fighting war, and thus furthers a humanitarian agenda. Yet, these calculations are often determined by intelligence services with statist interests who privilege the protection of the state through the military rather than the protection of lives. Orford argues that “wars conducted to protect populations generally result in human losses that cannot be considered unforeseeable collateral effects, since they form part of the very logic of intervention” (Fassin and Pandolfi 2010, 20). As already noted, even targeted drone attacks in Pakistan have been estimated to produce a seventeen percent non-militant fatality rate since 2004 (Counterterrorism Strategy Initiative 2012).

Re-labeling events as terrorism can have drastic and often unforeseen effects on the local population, and a regime’s success in securing the state can be synonymous with repression. The potential for using counterterrorism funding for national security strategy that can overlap with state terrorism remains high in the Huthi conflict, against Southern secessionists, and in suppressing anti-government rallies. The mass detentions of reporters, scholars and political activists have attracted widespread concern since the Arab Spring began, even though these practices are common in authoritarian regimes. In Yemen, the men arrested after the *USS Cole* and British embassy attacks exceeded the number of those affiliated with the groups suspected of perpetrating those attacks, showing government willingness to round up terrorist suspects without proper trial (Carapico 2000).

Violent crackdowns on peaceful protesters exhibit the use of repression under the name of securing the state. Rounding up citizens without trial has served as a warning, both in anti-terrorism efforts and in response to anti-regime protesters.

Blakely (2009) points out that state-led terrorism against citizens is common worldwide, and despite the increasing concern with “terrorism”, state terrorism is widely ignored. He defines state terrorism as the "excessive use of force, detentions without charge or trial, support for groups known to use terror, and a failure to condemn and prevent state terrorism" (Blakely 2009, 123), all of which the Yemeni state may be blamed. Bonnefoy and Detalle (2010) criticize the blind eye turned to U.S. military support long offered to governments to combat terrorism despite knowledge that the armed forces of those states regularly used terrorism against civilians. This is not a new trend.

When looking in particular at the Huthi rebellion in the North, local voices are markedly absent. While these factions do destabilize the regime and increase the likelihood of terrorist cells to be able operate covertly, the loose definition of terrorism has allowed the Yemeni government the convenience of claiming that any violent action, unlawful detention, or torture was a preventative measure of suspected terrorist activity. The Wikileaks cables have revealed some of the double agency and corruption of the joint counterterrorism cooperation between the United States and Saleh: regarding military equipment supplied by the U.S., Saleh expressed his satisfaction but said he “would like to be more satisfied in the future” (Shane 2010b).

Counterterrorism security measures typically target the outcomes or threats of terrorism rather than addressing terrorists’ root causes and concerns, which often increases contention in local populations. For example, major U.S. funding has been allotted for tightening joint Saudi/Yemeni border security due to the fear that both al-Qa’eda members will cross into the Empty Quarter in

the Eastern Desert from Saudi Arabia, and that Somali extremists will enter Yemen across the Red Sea. Tighter border security in the name of counterterrorism prevents the spread of terrorism into Saudi territory and prevents spillover of the Huthi conflict, which nevertheless crossed into Saudi territory in 2010 and resulted in casualties for Huthis and Saudis alike. Saudi security forces responded violently, but Hill (2008) argues that “for his part President Saleh has cynically manipulated Saudi fears of Shi’a unrest on the Yemen–Saudi border to raise cash and munitions to prosecute his war” (Hill 2008, 5).

Tighter border control has allowed the government to change its open-door policies toward Somali refugees in the name of counterterrorism, though the fear of terrorism spreading from Somalia to Yemen is as yet unsubstantiated (Healy and Hill 2010). Tightening Yemen’s borders also prevents migrants, both Yemenis and the Somali and Ethiopian migrants from Yemen, from seeking work in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf. A new Yemeni coast guard was funded and trained to prevent terrorism from spreading across the Red Sea, but has only shown success in interrupting smuggling routes of small arms from the African Horn. The coast guard presence, however, has created deadly confrontations with smugglers, resulting in an enormous increase of reported migrant deaths. Smugglers increasingly dump migrants off their boats as far as a mile offshore to avoid confrontations with officials, which has increased reports of migrants drowning and shark attacks (UNHCR 2009). They also take wider routes around coast guard patrolled areas, resulting in longer crossings that contribute to deaths from exhaustion and starvation. As a result of increased attention to these human rights atrocities, traffickers have shifted their routes to bypass coast guard patrols, depositing asylum seekers and refugees at unpredictable and remote locations where no humanitarian agencies were operating, which creates more difficulty for authorities and humanitarian workers respond to their needs (Hill 2008). Money transfers are also now often controlled in the name of preventing money laundering for terrorist purposes, which prevents refugees from

receiving money from home (de Regt 2006, 596), another deterrent for potential migrants. These restrictions to incoming refugees may be appealing to a struggling Yemeni state, pointing to its support of the newly strengthened coast guard, since the high numbers of incoming refugees strain Yemen's capabilities to provide for its already rapidly growing population, poverty and unemployment levels.

Mobilization, Civil Society and the Arab Spring

Despite the local politics evident in North and South Yemen during the revolutionary period and the emergence of a republic as a fledgling democracy in united Yemen in the 1990s, few have written about the activities of a civil society that has enabled the formation of organized protests and anti-regime movements. Shils (2003) defines civil society as the part of society that is separate from the state but beyond a localized scale. The state marks the outermost boundaries of the law, while the family or clan marks the innermost bounds. Civil society acts in the middle, limiting the action of the state but acting within the laws set by it. Civil society thus strengthens relationships between individuals, as well as between individuals and society.

Since the mid-1970s, remittance revenues and an emerging educated middle class have funded Local Councils for Cooperative Development, established as branches of local administration, providing clinics, schools and wells in rural areas where government service was particularly absent (Ismail 2000). After unification, political activity increased. Al-Zindani and al-Ahmar founded the Islah party by bringing together shaykhs, conservatives, tribal and radical Islamists who appealed to Southern regions that had resisted Socialism, especially in the governorates of Hadramawt and Abyan. Civil groups abounded, organizing and handling functions from supplying water to providing education and legal services. In these groups, "Political elites had

a supervisory, rather than driving role” in these organizations (Ismail 2000, 14). Foreign aid encouraged Yemen’s “democratic experiment”.

As the Saleh regime became increasingly more authoritarian, it clamped down on the power of civil society groups. This is common in authoritarian regimes, in which state secrets and lack of transparency tend to restrict information. Yet even though political mobilization and civil society groups are prevented from forming, they usually still gain enough access to information to “put and keep issues on the agenda.” (Joris Luyendijk quoted in an interview by Kester 2008, 501).

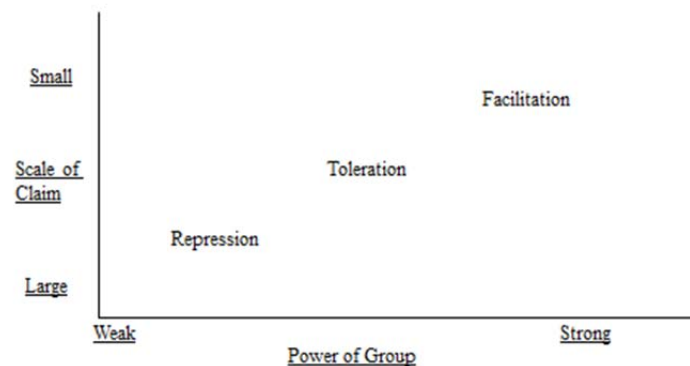
Mass protest movements and an active civil society infrastructure had been particularly prevalent in the South since the Marxist revolutionary organization of the 1970s PDRY. Though the Marxist project failed and the state collapsed, Marxist structure utilizes organization of production to identify shared interests and internal organization, which in turn can pave the way for collective action that builds a common consciousness (Tilly 1978). Economic, religious and intellectual institutions had proliferated in the South before unification, and despite the Southern state’s collapse, the experience of participating in these institutions remained.

The retraction of state power due to the limitations of Northern centralized power over the South after unification left a space in which civil society could resurge both within Islamic institutions and secularly “in the form of associations, businesses, charities —a counterforce to the State in which lies the potential for democratization” (Hinnbusch 1999, 354). When the state no longer incorporated the aims of an already established civil society, resistance proliferated in many forms: organized protests, unions, an outspoken press, tribal coalitions, and in a proliferation of opposition parties.

The increasing size, number, and frequency of protests have forced the government to alter its responses to protest movements. Government responses have varied, from tolerating resistance (such as that of rural tribes) to brutally cracking down on dissidents (such as on those in the

Southern Movement). According to Tilly (1978), the size and power of groups and their challenges to a regime can determine the types of government responses to their claims. Below is a graph that illustrates how a government may respond to challengers of its power:

Figure 3.1: Government Response to Challenges, Tilly (1978, 112)



This inverse relationship between group power and claim scale suggests why repressive regimes respond so violently to revolutionary movements: large claims of weak groups are more likely to be repressed, while small claims of strong groups are likely to be facilitated. Not included on the graph, small claims by weak groups can easily be ignored, but strong groups with large claims pose imminent threat to a regime, which has no easy way to appease protesters without giving into demands. Tilly (1978) shows that both repression and facilitation can increase mobilization and power, so long as organization can continue and gather support and interest for the cause. Applying these ideas to the Yemeni case, the government can easily satisfy the demands of tribal coalitions, since facilitating their claims can remove the threat of mass resistance. When a government is unwilling to relinquish control, repression must be violent enough to ruin further mobilization, which helps explain the violent repression of revolutionary movements of the Arab Spring despite international criticism.

According to Tilly (1978), social movements cannot occur without some democratic processes and social participation in politics already in place. These processes include the formation of collective identity groups who formulate demands for rights protections and government obligations and bounds within public politics. Tilly (1978) describes how democracy assists mobilization behind social movements by forming more regular and categorical relations between a government and its subjects, by creating institutions with public involvement, and increasing the binding consultation of subjects with regard to changes in governmental policy, resources and personnel.

Despite this correlation between social movements and democratic processes, Western counterterrorism rhetoric promoting democracy has fallen out of favor in policy circles since the Arab Spring uprisings have embraced Islamist leadership in democratic elections. The types of democracy that appear to be emerging from the Arab Spring reflect not Western democratic principles of freedom and equality, but rather the desire for popular control over Muslim identities who control their own political activities. A newly formed Islamist political party in Tunisia won over a third of the electoral seats in 2011, far more than any other party. The 2011 parliamentary elections in Egypt after the ousting of former president Hosni Mubarak granted the Muslim Brotherhood's Freedom and Justice Party nearly half the seats, and the hardline Salafi Islamist Nour party nearly a quarter. The popularity of Islamist and conservative groups worries many American conservatives who once championed democratic expansion, since the ascendancy of these groups into power does not guarantee cooperation with U.S. security or other strategic support.

The Arab Spring as a mass movement across the Middle East whereby populations gained traction from revolutions in other countries painted a picture of a new type of collective identity in the Arab consciousness. Gause (2011) argues that scholars can no longer look at countries individually, nor can the United States maintain allies with both democratic and non-democratic

states in the region because of the interconnectedness of political contention among Arab states, but this assessment overly simplifies the details of each political regime's history and standing, even when viewed as part of a greater context. Although Middle East scholars (see Gause 2011) assert that the Arab Spring represents a new type of Pan-Arabism and collective identity, the movements in the other Arab countries that have risen up against authoritarian leaders suggest the same trend as in Yemeni case: the data I have collected represents a steady mounting of opposition to the regime, one that may have been sparked by other Arab uprisings as a catalyst or inspiration but one in which a collective Arab identity is secondary at best. Other scholars caution against comparing the Yemeni Spring to the revolutions taking place in other Arab countries "because unlike Tunisia, Egypt, and Syria, Yemen is chronically underdeveloped, so what is happening now places additional strains on an already critical situation" (Steil 2011, 65). Steil (2011) argues that Yemen lacks the infrastructure for and experience of any effective governance, whether under the Saleh regime or another, in an already divided country.

The momentum behind the Arab Spring undeniably strengthened Yemeni protests against the Saleh regime and pushed them into international view, but assuming this was a novel change would be incorrect. Burrowes and Kasper (2007) identified the looming political collapse in light of Yemen's worsening economic and social crisis since 2004 if reforms were not implemented, and that it "simply could not wait until a peaceful transfer of power became a real possibility" (Burrowes and Kasper 2007, 268). The Yemeni regime did not hold power until the 2013 elections that would clarify whether Saleh would actually relinquish control of the country, whether he would groom his son to be his successor, or whether he would again run for reelection. The Yemeni Spring uprisings forced him to agree to resign in 2012 before finishing his term, though the outcome of how this will come to pass is yet to be seen.

The Yemeni Spring

Although events in 2011 are beyond the purview of this thesis, the events from 2000-2010 created a strong basis of political participation and unrest that paved the way for the Yemeni Spring to occur. The year 2011 opened more political space to address ethnic, religious, and political grievances in a divided country. The Yemeni Spring brought to the fore the demands of those marginalized in the South demanding secession or greater representation in government and rights equal to those in the North; of the continued Huthi claims to autonomy; and of Northerners dissatisfied with the authoritarian regime. The international attention and momentum of the Arab Spring undoubtedly strengthened the movement, but the motivations for regime change in Tunisia and Egypt do not explain the reasons for the Yemeni movement.

A collective Yemeni identity initially seemed to be a new development at the outset of the calls for regime change in February 2011. A collective revolution of South and North offered the potential for more substantive change in the South than would the unlikely event of secession. Many Southern governorates with strong support for the Islah party (especially Abyan, Hadramawt and Shabwa) favored revolution as a unified country over secession. They had a legacy of more positive relations with the GPC than did YSP-dominated regions, even though Islah was also an oppositional party. The YSP majorities in the governorates of Lahej and Dhali', where unemployment after unification hit the hardest, continued to call for secession and a more secular form of governance reminiscent of the Marxist era.

The simultaneous demands for revolution and Southern secession made apparent irreconcilable political motives. Southerners suspected that a change in leadership would not mean any significant change in North-South inequality. In April 2011, tension between anti-regime Northerners and members of the Southern Movement for independence escalated into violence (International Crisis Group 2011). By June, full-blown Southern independence movement was again

active and more visible than before, and has not been appeased by the accession of the Southern-born vice-president to power. Some in the Southern Movement called for civil disobedience to prevent the election on February 12, 2012, saying that participation in the election's single candidate vote would demonstrate support for al-Hadi's ascendancy to power and continuation of the authoritarian regime (Mussed 2012). Despite hopes that he will be able to initiate better national dialogue between North and South, most of the old regime remains in power, and al-Hadi's obvious allegiance to the GPC in his seventeen years as vice president has done little to instill optimism for Southern secessionists that he will lead a unified country more justly than his predecessor.

Chapter Four: Methods

I. Previous Media Studies

Working with event data presents numerous assets as well as shortcomings. Data collected from individual event reports exhibit rich detail and reveal trends of specific conflicts over time. The data can be presented to show a cross-section of political contention at a specific time. Adding locational data to event data enhances the level of analysis by showing the distribution of conflict, and how widespread and far-reaching contention is at any given time. In this section, I present examples from previous media studies, their findings, and the conclusions the authors drew on the validity of their approaches.

I consulted the work of previous media studies and the Armed Conflict Location and Event Dataset (ACLED) (Raleigh et al. 2009) to determine the efficacy of the size and level of detail of this thesis. O'Loughlin et al. (2010) compared ACLED data to new data revealed by the WikiLeaks War Logs from the Afghan War 2004-2009. They demonstrated that although previous media event data collection through ACLED (Raleigh et al. 2009) only contained a fraction of the events disclosed by the WikiLeaks, the data from both showed parallel trends in seasonal rises and falls of conflict, temporal peaks in violence, intensity of violence and escalations of conflict. Thus, although the WikiLeaks War Logs included far more data, the smaller amount used by ACLED represented the same trends and geographic distribution.

The conclusions from the O'Loughlin Wikileaks study agree with the statistical tests of Koopmans and Rucht (2002) that measured reliability across different levels of data specificity in media studies. Their tests compared media studies collected data from narrow sources of "quality" newspapers versus broader media coverage from diverse news sources, and unconventional types of

protest in various forms like press statements, petitions, and legislative decisions. The results of studies from these two types of data collection exhibited markedly similar results (correlation coefficients of .96, or $p < .001$) despite the different levels of specificity in the data. In fact, cross-referenced news articles between two major sources only contributed one-quarter to one-third more events than using a single source. The authors concluded that not only was reliability from newspaper coverage data quite good, but that the efficiency from a small number of reliable sources outweighed the benefits of cross-referencing too meticulously among other sources:

“Generally, of course, the use of multiple source (media and nonmedia, several newspapers instead of just one) is preferable. However, cost and time considerations should again be taken into account. For example, taking two newspapers generally more than doubles the time required for coding, because in addition to coding additional events, information on the same events in both sources has to be identified, matched, and combined. Quantitatively, the amount of extra events gained by adding a second source is significantly less than the increase in coding time” (Koopmans and Rucht 2002, 238).

The authors then compared event data from media sources to police report data. Although the narrower perspective of police report data revealed more specific information about each individual event and protester detained, the correlation coefficients were still markedly high. Hocke (1999) determined that collecting event data from media sources was a valid method of data collection, since the three different sources all produced meaningful and reliable data despite different biases, coverage, depth of detail, and scope.

II. Working with Event Data

I carefully selected sources for my data by attempting to balance them against one another, and by using international news sources that would have fewer stakes in the outcomes of the events reported. I paid heed to the following cautionary statement:

“Haphazard sources replicate the biases in the official data (on one side) or are silent about the activities of the other (typically rebel) side. To compensate for this disparity, academics sometimes turn to rebel websites, although these sources also tend to overstate victorious engagements and government losses while minimizing their own setbacks” (O’Loughlin et al. 2010, 480).

For these reasons, I focused primarily on non-American international newswires but checked them against local Yemeni newspapers and regional sources such as Al-Jazeera articles. I avoided American and Yemeni newspapers as primary sources when possible due to biases involving the GWOT except when consulting editorials for opinions and context. Decisions on dealing with bias and subjectivity in media studies were unavoidable since media reports, especially in areas with limited press coverage, tend to reproduce the ideology of the readership elite for a number of practical reasons (Klocke 2004). Independent media that compete with government-run newspapers and television shows in Yemen face restrictions on advertising revenue, an impoverished population that cannot afford subscriptions, and high rates of illiteracy among the population. This encourages a relationship between the media and the primarily elite audience, which affects themes of predominant media coverage and the ways in which material is presented, which contributes to the formulation of dominant ideologies (Klocke 2004, 25).

I used ACLED coding techniques as a starting point for the design of this project, but tweaked the search criteria and types of information I collected to better fit this thesis. I have followed the advice of mobilization scholars (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 1996) in broadening the scope of my thesis beyond violent event analysis to incorporate other types of “contention”: a wider array of protest, social movements, ethnic mobilizations, and revolutions that share many components that have been obscured in defining them as distinct events. “Revolutionary situations resemble extreme cases of social movement cycles: as the split within a polity widens, all rights and identities come to be contested, the possibility of remaining neutral disappears and the state's

vulnerability becomes more visible to all parties” (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 1996, 24). For this reason I included all politically contentious events that arose in my data searches because, especially when looking at protest data, the line between violent and peaceful, organized versus riotous, is fine, especially in non-democratic states.

I used the search engine LexisNexis to compile all news reports of politically contentious events from the decade of this thesis, and coded them according to location, perpetrator (actor 1), target (actor 2), any affiliated allies, and numbers of casualties reported. The types of events I used versus those used by ACLED are listed below:

Table 4.1: Event type categories in this thesis compared to those used by ACLED

ACLED Event Types	Event Types in This Thesis
Battle- No Change of Location Control Battle- Rebel Control Location Battle- Government Regains Control Non-Violent Transfer of Location Control	Battle: indicates a two-way conflict or “clash”. Control of territory was not a focus of my thesis.
[not used by ACLED]	Attack: indicates one-sided violence such as ambushes and raids.
[not used by ACLED]	Bombing: a separate category due to the increasing frequency of this type of attack
Rioting/ Protesting	Protest: includes peaceful and violent riots, rallies, both in support of and in opposition to a cause
Violence Against Civilians*	I reclassified “Violence against Civilians” as more specific event types. These events were usually “attacks”, since they are usually one-sided violence without collective defensive civilian action.
[not used by ACLED]	Internment: includes kidnappings, hijackings, piracy, arbitrary detentions, and widespread arrests without due cause (especially during protests).

*I avoided using the term “violence against civilians,” since it suggests that bounds of “legitimate” (or “legal”) violence exist and have been crossed. Further, this term connotes a certain innocence of civilians, whereas the opposite is true when the victims are labeled as rebels. Such labels over-simplify the events they intend to describe.

Due to difficulties in collecting documentation of these many forms of civil society claims in protest to Yemeni authority, I have not included specific drafts of petitions, legislative bills, formal letters of address to government officials, public opinion data, and so forth, but availability of these would create a reason for archival research and a basis for future study on this time period. Rather, I attempt to use context to be included in a discussion of the political struggle.

Numbers of casualties (in which I combine the number of deaths and injuries) referenced in this thesis are merely rough estimates, but nevertheless signify trends and severity of conflicts. The numbers I compiled from media reports show which actors perpetrate and conflicts result in the most violence, and which types of events remain largely peaceful. From the articles I collected, for any duplicates I calculated the average of the most probable, consistent figures of deaths and injuries, and deleted any events without substantial detail (such as location, actors, or date).

Two issues in particular received a disproportionate amount of media coverage, however: the Huthi conflict in the North, and the crossings of migrants from the African Horn. Freedom House (2010) stated in particular that journalists who reported on anti-regime issues were especially vulnerable to harassment. Media coverage of the Huthi conflict was restricted to the point of sparking massive journalist protests in 2007 in which journalists and other civilians staged weekly sit-ins and rallies to demand freer speech and the acquittal of journalists who had been arrested when covering the events. For overall estimations of casualties in the Huthi conflict, I compared government statistics and independent media statistics to the individual events I had found in order to gauge how reliable the individual event data approximations were. This helped to balance my sources and to fill in the numerous gaps in coverage that relying on individual event coverage would have left, especially since most news reports only stated large general casualty estimates from the previous month or year. I also disregarded tribal violence from this analysis, since coverage was

scant in non-Yemeni sources. Most of the articles noting tribal violence did not detail if the tribal disputes dovetailed other issues like the Huthi conflict, al-Qa'eda, or local political contention, though when a journalist suggested such a link, I coded it accordingly. For Red Sea crossings, I relied on UNHCR summary data to estimate the numbers of migrants and casualties for each year, as it was much more complete than coverage in newswires. For this reason, I did not maintain an “event count” of these migrations and withheld this event type from general graphs demonstrating the political events and political violence in Yemen during the decade, though I do show how Red Sea migrants are an important constituency of Yemen’s social matrix.

One complaint I have tried to address is that “not enough attention has been given to violence conducted by the authorities who are sent to deal with violent actions (or what could be called official violence)” (Ahmed 2004, 20). In order to reconcile this concern, I used the group “Yemeni Government” as an instigator of conflict (“actor 1”), but even though this actor was responsible for the highest number of casualties throughout the decade, these data do not explain what events preceded each conflict, which would clarify whether the government was responding to violence or an outright perpetrator. Even though the instigator of violence was not always the instigator of conflict, I identified the perpetrator as the actor who committed the most violence when it was unclear which group sparked an event. Thus, in order to highlight specific trends in the Yemeni cases of political contention, I strayed slightly from the terms posed by the ACLED codebook (Raleigh et al. 2009) in order to fit the most pertinent details of the Yemeni case, outlined below:

Table 4.2: List of principle perpetrators of political violence

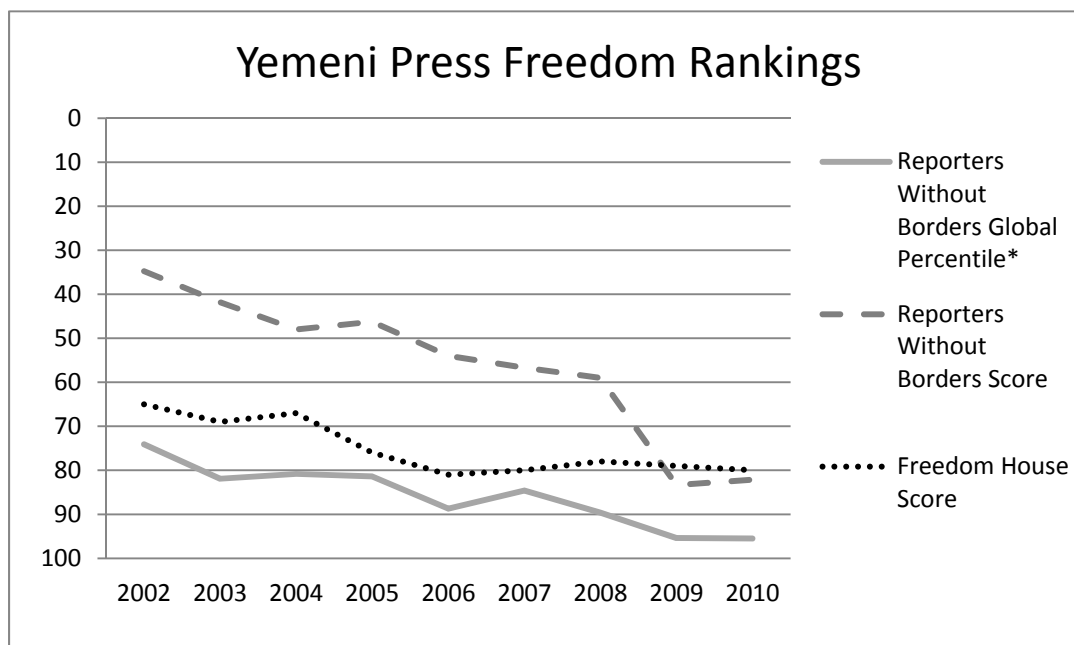
Actor Group Label	Group Constituency
AQAP and Islamists*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any group claiming Islam for violent action Al-Qa'eda in the Arab Peninsula, though I use this term as a general actor for any suspected al-Qa'eda activity. Occasionally includes violence in the name of the Islah party
Civilians**	Protesters and tribesmen without specific political affiliation.
National Security Forces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yemeni Security Forces (YSF). military, army, navy, coast guard, police, Yemeni Defense Ministry Yemeni Officials (YO). Includes judges, lawyers, intelligence officers etc., and anyone holding office under any major political party. Occasional alliance with Saudi and US Security Forces
Huthi Rebels	I was unable to differentiate between militants and civilians, so this label encompasses the Huthi militia and any affiliates (namely the “Believing Youth”), and any civilians involved in violence when not expressly identified as civilian bystanders.
Southern Movement	Anyone affiliated with Southern Secession, even if not formally a member of the Yemen Socialist Party that leads much of the movement. Includes Civilians acting in the Southern movement.

* Islamists were only put into this category in instances of violent Islamic activity that appeared to be acts of terrorism. I did not include actions by political Islamists, namely supporters of Islah, in this category, but rather listed them as civilians with a political group as an ally. In this category, I also do not differentiate between “Al-Qa’eda” and “Al-Qa’eda in the Arabian Peninsula” (the Arabian branch now officially based in Yemen), nor do I tease apart relationships of splinter groups or unverified tribal affiliations, since much of these specifics tend to be speculative.

**The term “civilian” is problematic, since in many cases of political contention, only a fine (and often subjective) line separates a “civilian” from a “rebel”. For this thesis, I underutilize the term “civilians”, but have upheld its uses in the following instances: protesters targeted by violence from security forces; casualties as “collateral damage” in attacks, especially in airstrikes without possible intervention or escape; and those who suffered indiscriminate violence in Huthi areas, when it was possible to identify which attacks affected Huthis beyond the “rebels”. Identities are always layered, with undoubted overlap between the categories I used.

In order to demonstrate challenges of a media study over this decade and to understand restrictions of my data, I graphed the Freedom House annual ranking of press freedoms against the annual scores of Yemen's press from Reporters Without Borders. A score of 100 indicates no press freedom. The "Global Percentile" compares the freedom of Yemen's press to all other countries measured:

Figure 4.1: Freedom of the press rankings



*I adjusted the percentage ranking each year for the increasing number of countries ranked globally by Reporters Without Borders. 100% corresponds to the country measured with the least amount of press freedom. This differs from the raw "scores" of the Yemeni Press, in which the higher numbers represent greater media restrictions based upon specific criteria as indicated on each group's website.

All markers of press freedoms declined, both within Yemen and in comparing Yemen's media coverage to the rest of the world. With this in mind, as the decade progressed, the government likely presented itself in a more positive light and its opponents in a more negative one. This does not necessarily mean that violence was underreported; in some instances, conflicts were

likely exaggerated for government propaganda. Most likely, the accuracy of government-censored media reports strayed farther from reality as its press freedoms declined, though in which direction from reality would depend on political significance of the theme covered.

Access to information in Yemen extends beyond state censorship into the social realm where tribes, clans and families often shun journalistic reporting, regardless of whether it is “grounded in democracy’s public accountability” (Kenny and Gross 2008, 517). For this reason, I could not account for tribal violence, no matter how “political”, since it was not consistently covered by media. I did not record revenge killings, which are common among tribes and often representing decades-long tribal vendettas. To show the discrepancy between the data I collected and estimates of the number of tribal deaths by newspapers, Agence France Presse (2004a) listed an “official estimate” of 1500 inter-tribal deaths per year, whereas the tribal deaths that I accumulated for the entire decade totaled only 349 deaths. Even though revenge killings may be considered the strongest expression of local politics in tribal regions and can overlap with broader political motives, I did not include them because they usually do not target state-level political actors.

Even if reporting were more common, more welcomed, and generally freer, most of Yemen is so rural that poor infrastructure, access, and communications restrict media coverage. Very high rates of illiteracy and lack of internet availability compound the lack of access to outside media, especially to the social media outlets that have enabled individual reporting in recent anti-government protests in the greater Middle East. Restrictions vary from place to place, however: Military checkpoints are common on all major roads in Yemen, but the government has heavily restricted outsiders from passing through the roads from Sana’a to Sa’da in particular. As a result, little evidence of activity or perspective of the conflict has leaked to the wider public. In contrast, the Southern Movement has gathered momentum that attracts media attention due to its central

location and the existence of political institutions and civil society mechanisms. The Southern Movement has thus created a stronger resistance to the government despite fewer events and less violence before 2010, in part due to the public eye directed towards Southern activity, which pressures the government to avoid tainting its image by responding violently.

Some press restrictions are mandated by the 1990 Press and Publications Law, for example Article 103 which prohibits journalists from criticizing the head of state and from publishing material that “distorts the image of Yemeni, Arab, or Islamic heritage” (Freedom House 2010). In 2004 and 2007, journalists mobilized protests against crackdowns on freedom of the press after several high-profile cases of journalist arrests, detention, torture, license revocations, and paper closures. The group “Women Journalists Without Chains,” with help from statistics from Amnesty International, Reporters Without Borders, the US State Department, and the Amman Center for Human Rights, compiled the following statistics in 2007. The data lent credence to journalists’ complaints—the highest instances of crackdowns on press freedoms were all committed by the following worst offenders (al-Alaya’a 2007):

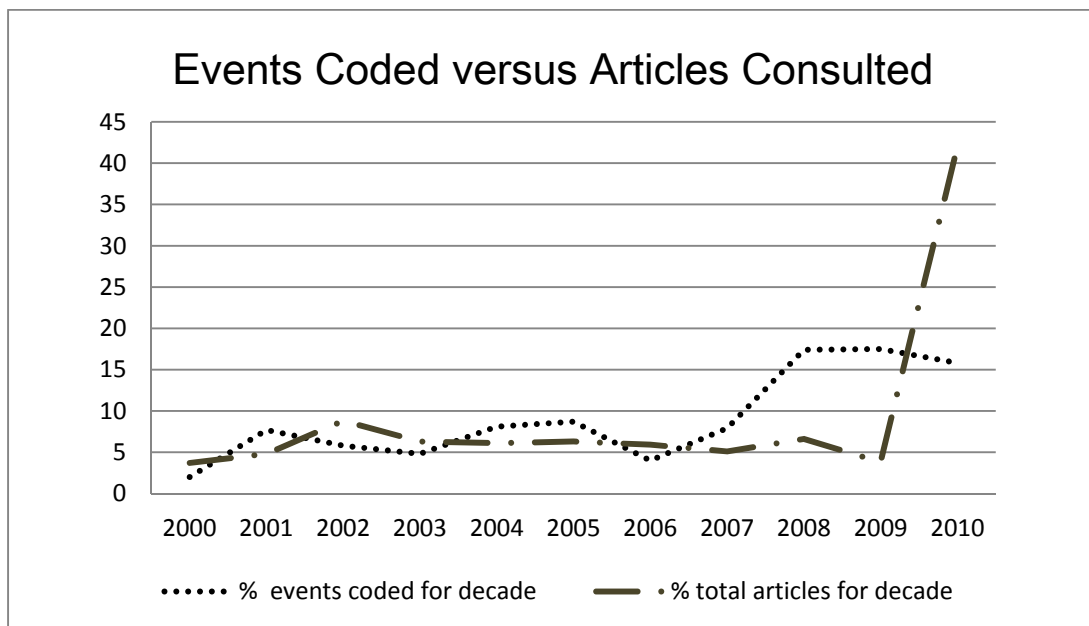
Table 4.3: Violators of Yemeni press freedoms

Violators of Press Freedoms, 2007	
National Security Forces	28%
Ministry of Information	28%
Ministry of the Interior	16%
Political Security Office	13%
Military Guidance Unit	3%
Other	13%

To address my concern that media coverage later in the decade would produce more articles than earlier in the decade led me to compare the quantity of media results from the Lexis Nexis

searches over time. I found that greater availability of information overlapped among foreign news sources and from more events as violence increased, rather than from missing information earlier in the decade. The proportion of events covered by media to the occurrence of events was likely smaller than earlier in the decade when the press was less restricted. For this reason, below I analyzed the number of articles I consulted compared to the number of events that I found covered in any media source in order to determine whether the higher numbers of articles later in the decade correlated to a proportionally greater number of events. I also used this graph to show that a wider media search did not reveal significantly more results or better quality data:

Figure 4.2: Number of events coded compared to the number of articles



One concern about this thesis's data limitations is that media reports tend to cycle through trendy issues, granting much more attention to one theme at a time and underrepresenting other issues. Therefore, numbers of events and casualties likely exaggerate peaks of violence in events that receive more attention at a given time. State involvement, however, also often follows these trends

as the priorities change, and so we can assume that heightened media coverage indicates increasing state involvement.

Figure 4.2 shows that the larger number of articles consulted in 2010 did not produce significantly higher results for violent events than those consulted in 2009. Rather, the increasing violence later in the decade likely produced much higher news coverage and international attention than ever before. The proliferation of articles in 2010 from my search criteria (1701 articles that produced 110 discrete events) compared to the smaller number of articles produced by my search criteria in 2009 (151 articles that produced 122 discrete events) gives confidence that my data collection covered most notable political events, regardless of smaller numbers of articles available in the earlier years of the decade. This analysis agrees with the conclusion reached by Koopmans and Rucht (2002) that increasing the quantity of sources and articles to consult does not necessarily create better results, but that it most likely yields more overlap in coverage of the same events.

In addition to limitations of working with event data, coding methods also affect the outcomes of this thesis and require decisions that compromise the data by restricting it to discrete categories of the types of events included, the actors involved, and the degree of specificity for the scope of this thesis. As suggested by Ahmed (2004), I have done my best to delineate different types of political contention, thereby separating extremism from terrorism, criminal violence from politically motivated assaults, and unilateral from two-way violence. As for number of events reported, I attempted to separate individual events, even when relying on compiled data: for weekly protests over a long time period, I considered each an individual event; if protests were organized around the same theme on the same day but in multiple cities, I considered each a separate event.

III. Working with Geospatial Data

I included locational data within the decade studied for this thesis in order to map trends of political contention across the country and determine in what ways location matters to the conflicts. Although I used the most locational specificity available from the news reports, locations outside of major population areas were often impossible to identify, especially locations named as mountains, highways, small villages, or seasonal riverbeds (*wadis*). Rural conflict was even more difficult to determine. These locations were often not available from fallingrain.org or Google Earth, the two sites I relied on for latitudinal and longitudinal points. The inconsistencies of transliteration in the media reports made many obscure names impossible to pinpoint in either Arabic or English search engines.

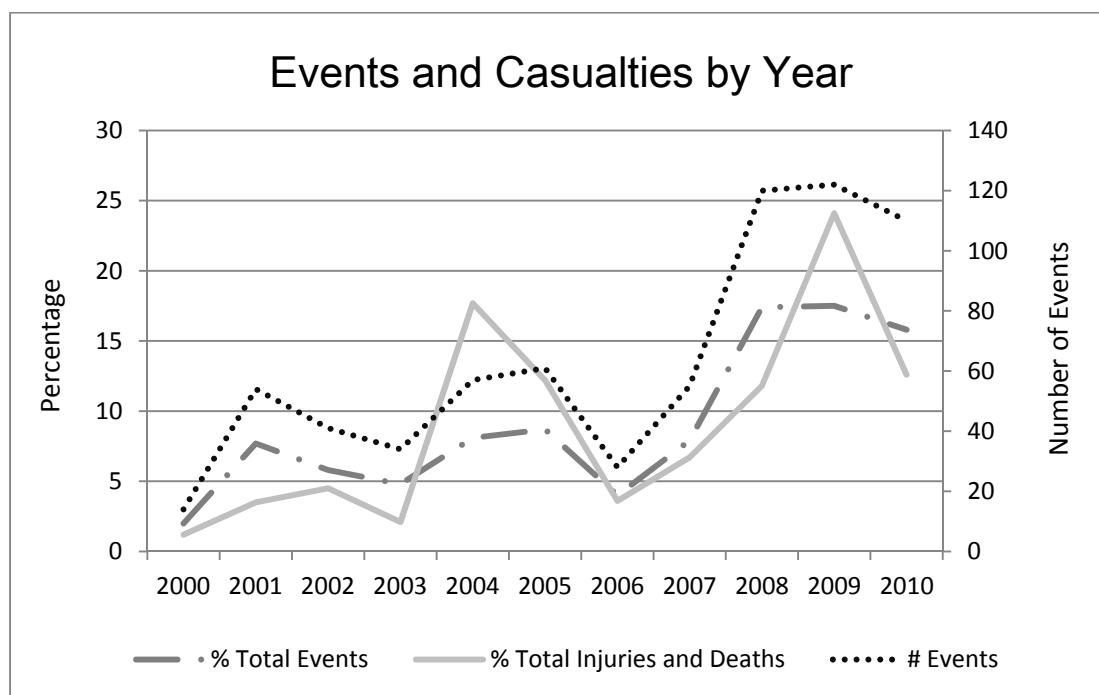
I identified geographic coordinates to the best accuracy revealed in reports and attempted to cross-reference unclear locations between several sources. Often, the most detailed information of an event's location was at the governorate level. Yemen's governorates tend to increase in size as the population becomes less dense away from Sana'a and Aden, especially in desert provinces. When impossible to pinpoint more precise event locations, I created default locations rather than randomizing locations within governorates. For heavily populated governorates, I selected the population centers, since these were more likely to be sites of conflicts rather than the rural areas. For less populated governorates, I chose the governorate center as the default location since events in those locations (such as anti-terrorist air raids and drone attacks and kidnappings) tended to occur precisely in low population density areas. This creates clustering of events in the map that may appear as misleading, but clusters in remote locations simply indicate that remote areas of the governorate have experienced unrest and do not suggest that a precise location, especially in rural areas, was the specific site of numerous events.

Chapter Five: Data, Analysis and Results

Due to the challenges presented in the previous chapter, the data I have collected are incomplete, but nevertheless valuable: despite unavoidable gaps in the material I coded, the data still demonstrate meaningful trends in unrest and violence in Yemen surrounding prominent political themes. With this in mind, I caution the reader to withhold from taking the measurements in graphs and tables as exact measurements of the phenomena I describe, but rather as an indicator of trends.

All the events collected from media reports from 2000-2010 reveal three specific waves of political contention:

Figure 5.1: Events and casualties by year



The periods of political contention were accompanied by parallel trends in numbers of casualties. The first period of unrest in 2001-2002 was relatively peaceful, shown by the high ratio of numbers of events to casualties. Higher rates of both total and relative casualties accompanied the second and third periods of contention. Despite fewer events and casualties in the second period, the proportion of casualties to events was highest in 2004, when the first Huthi conflict broke out. *Figure 5.1* may even underestimate the Huthi violence, since the non-newsworthy events and lack of reportage and access likely covered up events in rural areas or in times when the government censored its activities in Huthi regions.

Of the three waves of violence in this decade, 2007 witnessed an escalation of unprecedented political contention (a fivefold increase from 2006 to 2008) that has not since abated. The large spike characteristic in the first two waves of violence in the decade was also distinctly missing in the 2008-2009 wave, in which the contention has been sustained and never fell to the earlier levels of relative peace. Rather than individual points of contention marking violent years as reactions to specific events (which had produced peaks in violence in 2001 and 2004), after 2008, multiple points of contention formed the themes that have sustained the violence in Yemen: the Huthi conflict continued (though not as violently as in 2004), protests continued on previous themes and also expanded to encapsulated the Southern Movement, and terrorism increased. Although in 2010 the recorded violence from the events tapered significantly, the numbers of contentious events remained higher than all other years before 2008.

Smaller units of aggregation help show which specific political instances sparked contentious events. Below are two graphs of events in two-month periods for the entire decade. *Figure 5.2* shows numbers of events in each period in grey, overlaid by a darker line of the moving average that levels the peaks out by averaging every two points to provide a more general level of aggregation of

overlapping four month periods. *Figure 5.3* includes the overall trend line of events in the decade graphed on top of the raw event data, which shows the steady rise in violence:

Figure 5.2: All events showing moving three-point average

Figure 5.3: All events with overall trend line

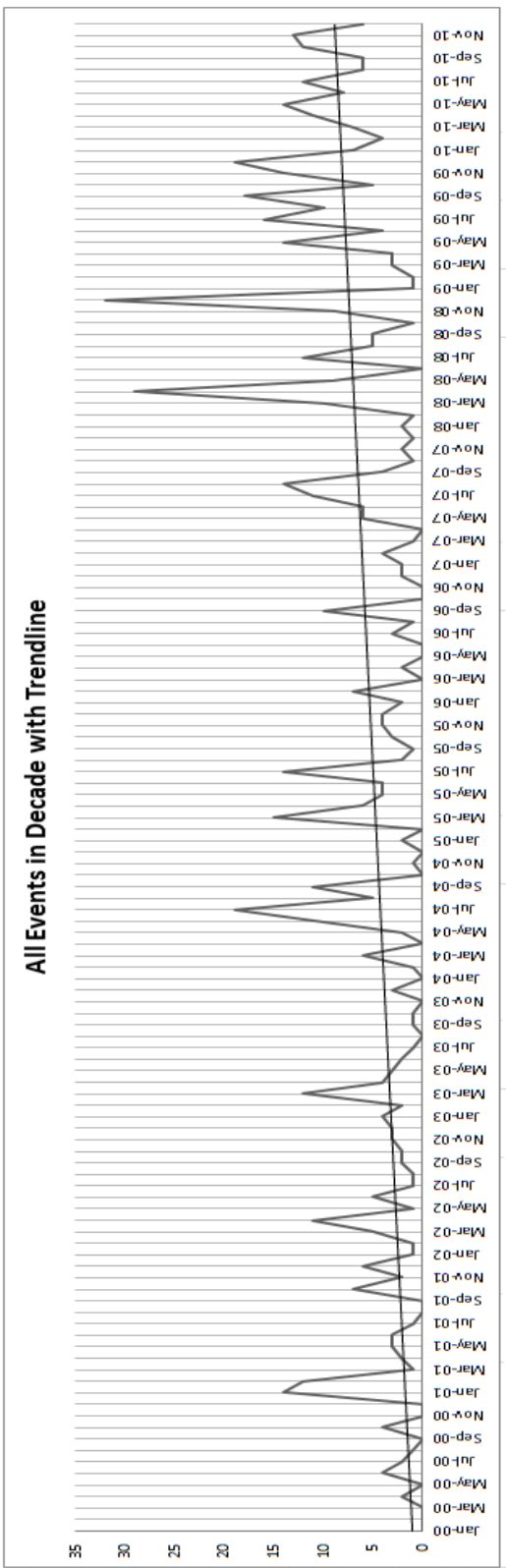
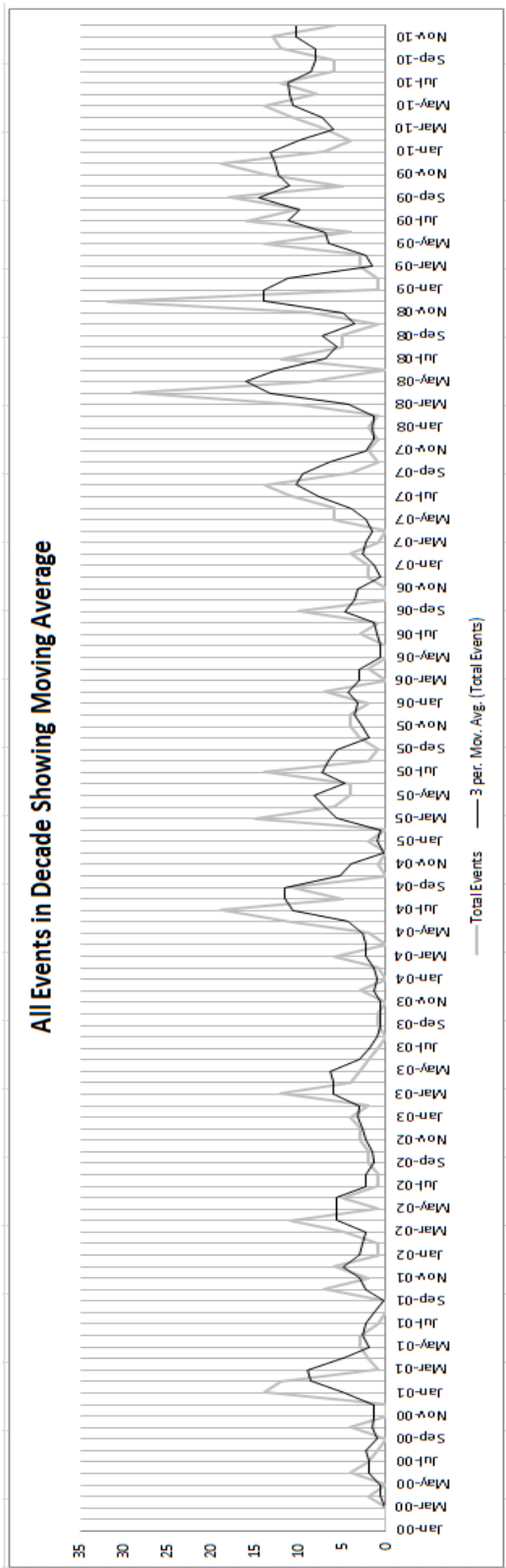


Table 5.1: Major events timeline

Year	Major Protest Movements	Huthi War	Major Extremist Activity
2000	Oct.: Clinton Peace Process fails in Israel/Palestine war	None	Oct.: Al Qa'eda <i>USS Cole</i> bombing
2001	Feb.: first municipal election since unification. May: Government imposes regulations on Qu'ranic schools, sparking protests by Islah and Shi'a	None	None
2002	None	None	Oct. Al Qa'eda <i>Limburg</i> bombing Nov: 1st US drone attack in Yemen Dec.: Three American doctors murdered
2003	March: Iraq war begins May: parliamentary elections	None	April: 10 suspected AQ members escape from a high-security Yemeni prison
2004	None	Jun.: Huthi war begins	None
2005	IMF subsidy cuts spark riots	March: Huthis launch armed assaults on YSF	None
2006	Feb.: Danish cartoons scandal Sept.: Presidential Election. Little election violence beyond stampede at GPC support rally	Feb.: Ceasefire	Feb.: 23 militants escaped from a high-security prison, including 10 convicted in <i>USS Cole</i> bombing
2007	May: Media protests over restrictions in covering Huthi conflict July: Southern Movement comes to a fore. Protests against price hikes, poor public services, and lack of aid to veterans laid off after civil war.	Feb.: Ceasefire fails; government stages offensive June: Ceasefire Nov.: Ceasefire fails	July: Suicide bomber kills Spanish tourists in Ma'rib.
2008	March: YSF inflammatory remarks in recruitment mission to South Nov.: open calls for Southern Independence. Dec.: Mass protests preceding April 2009 elections	May: Huthi fighting reignites	April: AQAP claims bombing of foreigners' residences. U.S. embassy evacuates all non-essential diplomatic staff. Sept: Islamic Jihad in Yemen militants attack US embassy Jan.: Gunmen kill Belgian tourists in Hadramawt.
2009	April: local and parliamentary elections.	August: government launches offensive against Huthis. Rebels call it genocide.	Nov.: Ft. Hood shooter claims inspiration from Yemeni cleric Anwar Awlaki. December: Nigerian Delta bomber claims inspiration from Awlaki
2010	May- Ansar al-Shari'a takes control of several towns in Abyan including the capital Zinjibar	None	None

The timeline in *table 5.1* identifies major events in the decade that sparked or resulted from contentious events. In the earliest years of the decade, low levels of violence accompanied protests against the wars in Afghanistan and Israel and the campaigns for elections in 2001. The 2001 elections passed a referendum extending both the presidential and parliamentary terms by two years, and doubled the number of government-appointed council positions. Early raids on al-Qa'eda began in response to the *USS Cole* bombing, and protests against Yemeni-U.S. relations increased in 2002 when the U.S. launched its first documented drone attack on Yemeni soil, killing the *USS Cole* mastermind Sinan al-Harithi. Terrorist attacks increased moderately, as terrorists committed two notably high-profile attacks, killing American missionary doctors in Jibla in 2002 and bombing the French tanker *Limburg* in 2003. The notable politically-motivated assassination of Jarallah Omar also occurred in 2002. He had been the Assistant Secretary General of the YSP, playing a vital role in forming the opposition bloc of the JMP (Armies of Liberation, 2007).

The major events of 2003 were protests directed against the Iraq War and relatively violent parliamentary elections. In 2004, the Huthi War erupted in June and overshadowed all other conflict. In 2005, protests proliferated, notably among women's groups and students. They were directed against an expanding number of issues, including journalism restrictions, Guantanamo detentions, a proposed arms ban, a repatriation plan suggested for Somali residents, and an instance of an American desecration of the Qu'ran. The most frequent and violent protests were directed against IMF-related price hikes, which cut subsidies on fuel and food as part of a delayed implementation of an IMF restructuring program agreed upon in 1995. These cuts increased petrol prices by 90%, diesel by 260%, kerosene by 250% and cooking gas by 100% (Deutsche Presse-Agentur 2005 b.), which placed immense strain on already low-income families. 2006 was a relatively peaceful year aside from violent events surrounding the presidential elections, the first time a genuine opposition candidate was on the ballot against Saleh, even though Saleh received over 75% of the vote. The

caricatures of the Prophet Mohammad from Danish newspapers also sparked more protests. Western involvement in the Muslim world, ill treatment of detainees in Guantanamo and other prisons abroad, and against Israeli attacks in the West Bank that came to a fore in 2006.

From 2007 onwards, politically-motivated violence escalated to unprecedented levels. The Huthi conflict raged between intermittent ceasefires, and the Southern Movement became increasingly active as the Joint Meeting Parties drew all opposition parties into collective action against the GPC, calling for equality and secession. Brutal government crackdowns on protests became common as more protests were directed against the regime. Restrictions on the press accompanied this anti-regime unrest, which in turn produced more frequent journalist protests and sit-ins. The Southern Movement was particularly incensed after the government agreed to a recruitment mission to the South to reconsider the hiring eligibility of the 60,000 military members and civil service workers laid off after the 1994 civil war. After recruiters declared that the former Southern troops lacked the “strength and loyalty necessary” to serve in the Yemeni Armed Services, the Southern Movement began open calls for independence six months later (Deutsche Presse-Agentur 2008).

Terrorist activity also increased significantly after 2008, in large part due to the 2006 prison break. In 2009, AQAP formally merged the Yemeni and Saudi al-Qa’eda branches and targeted Westerners present in Yemen. YSF attacks on terrorist cells and American-directed drone attacks and raids increased, which contributed significantly to the numbers of casualties related to violent Islam after 2008. None of the other points of contention over the Huthi conflict, journalism restrictions, voting freedoms, price hikes, Western influence and terrorist activity abated for the rest of the decade.

All of these event locations are mapped below by initiating and target actors below to show the main areas of activity. Some of the conflicts mapped were two-way conflicts (with event types identified as “battles”), but I defined the actor with the fewest casualties as the initiator unless otherwise specified in the articles I consulted. I defined victims as target actors, as well as those whom peaceful protests were directed against (hence some of the locations of foreign nationals as target groups).

Figures 5.4 and 5.5: Locations of events by initiating groups, 2000-2010

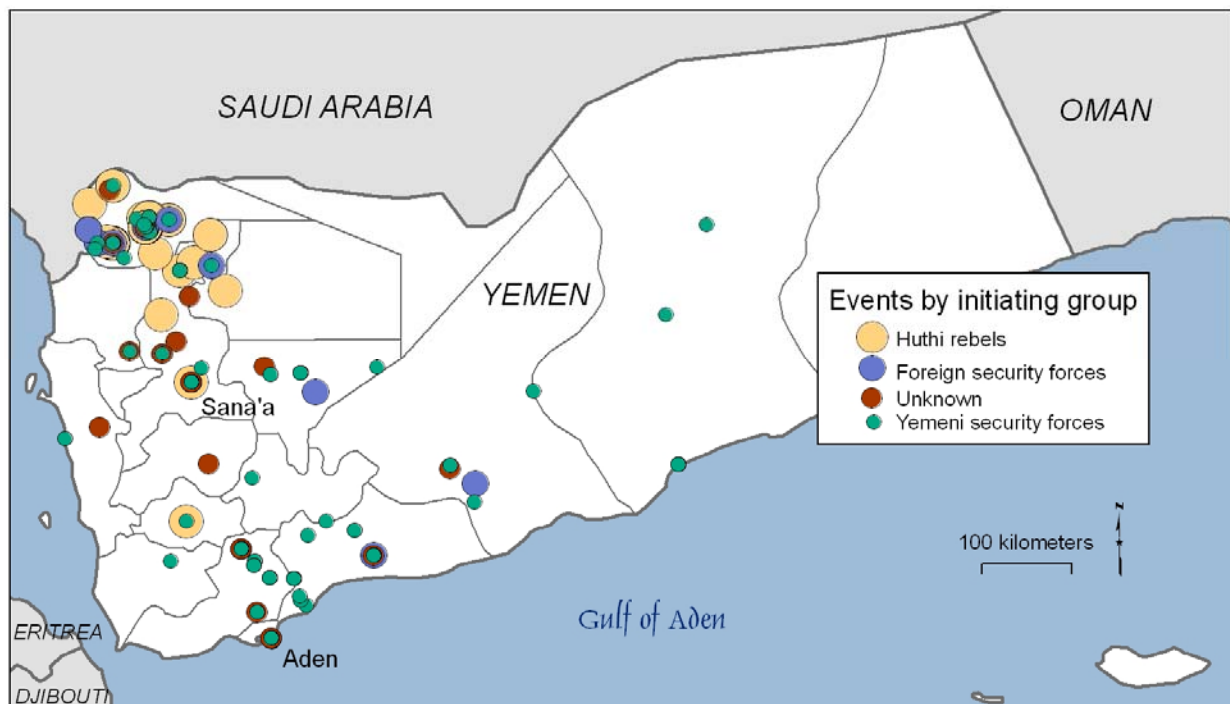
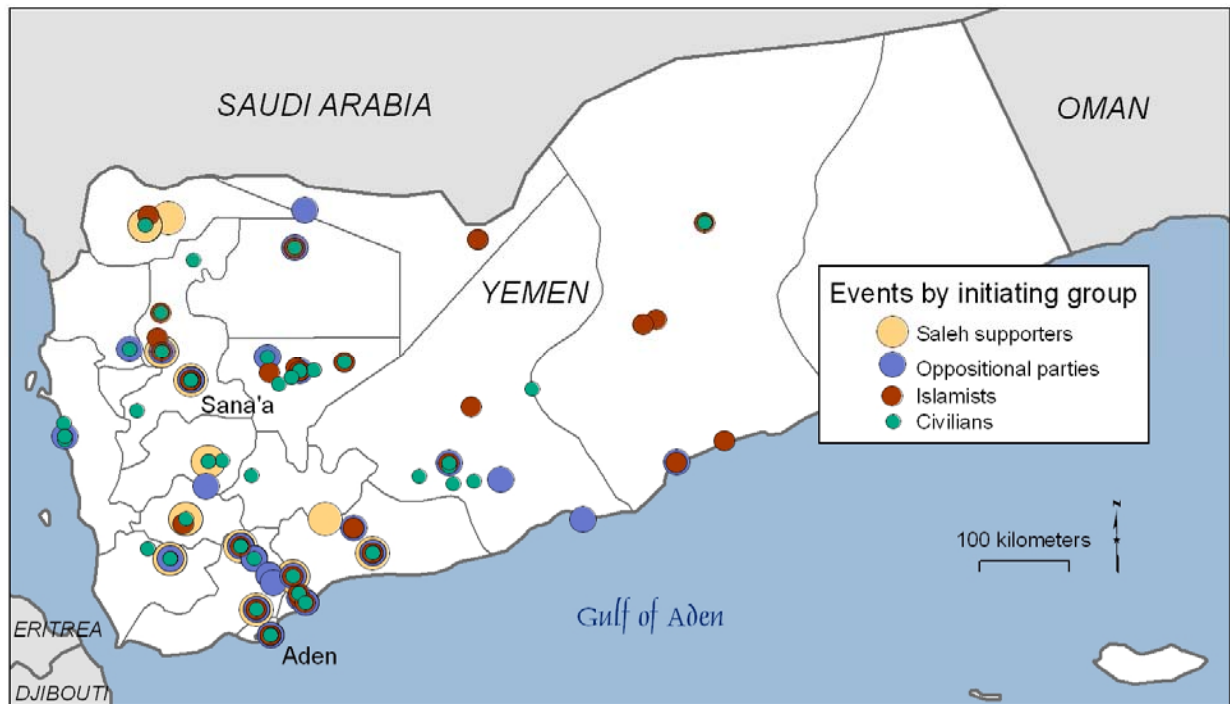
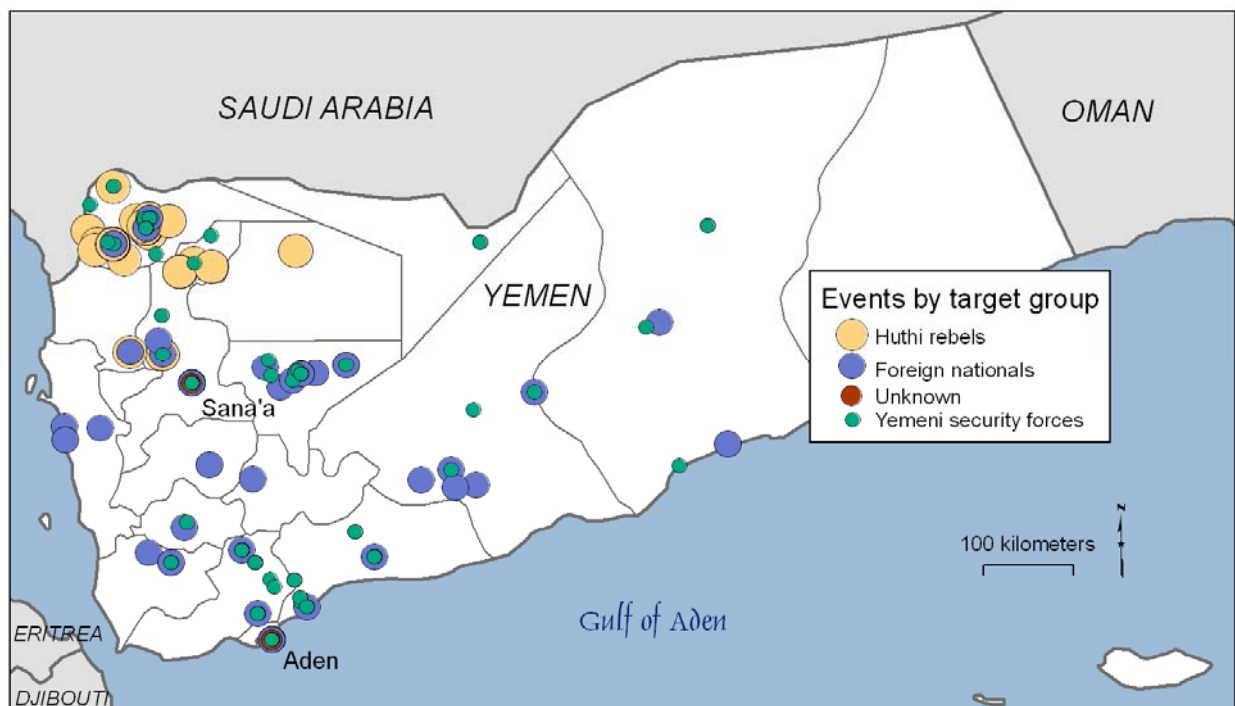
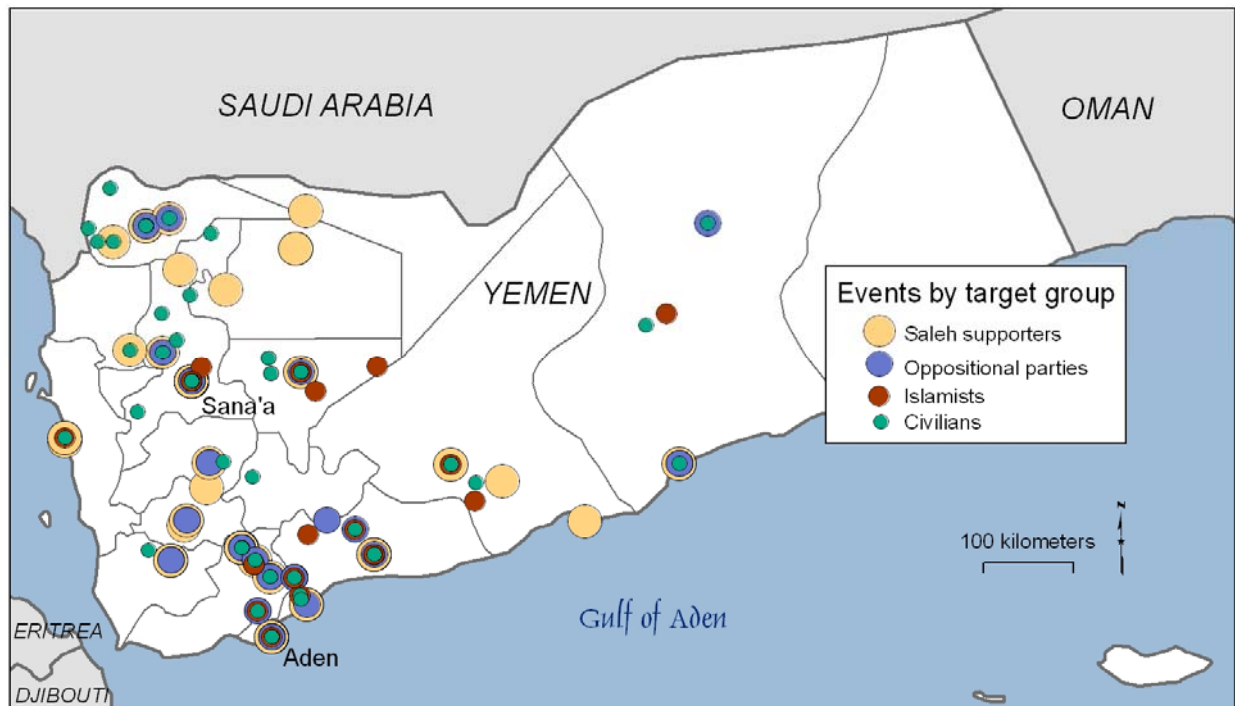
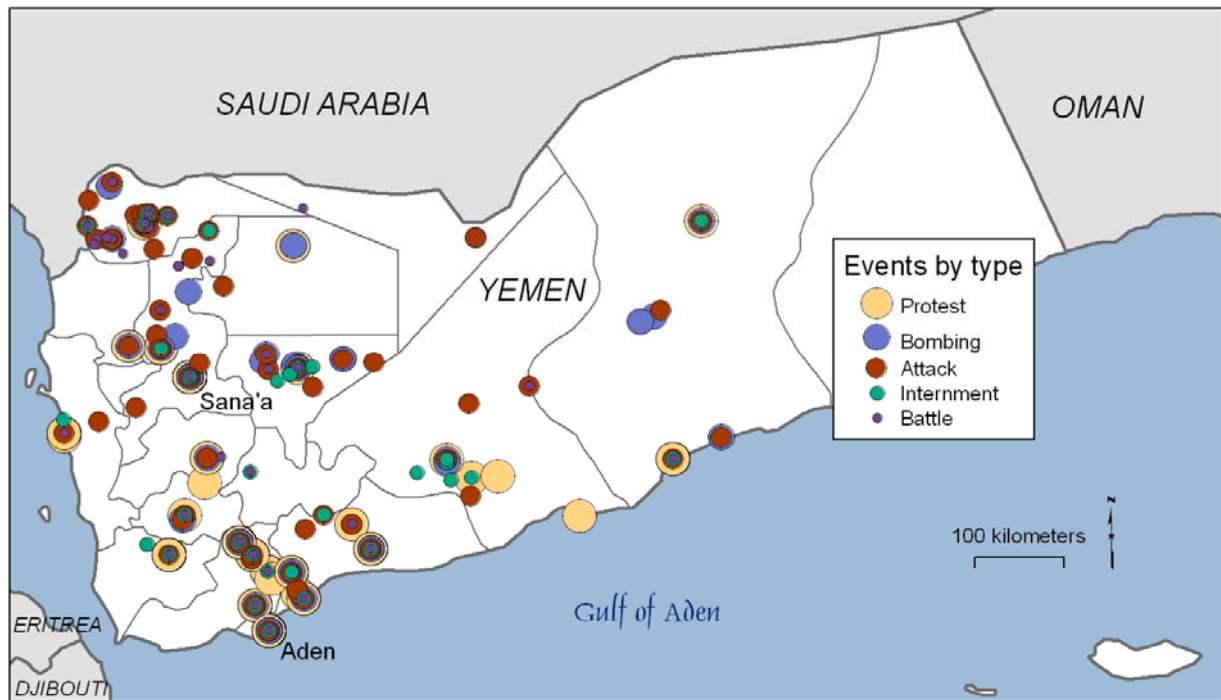


Figure 5.6 and 5.7: Locations of events by target group, 2000-2010



Despite the country-wide scale of these maps, they still show that the activities of specific groups are for the most part limited to territorial control, even though approximation of rural place names (due to transliteration trouble and multiple locales with the same name) and unclear locations in reports made locations less accurate on the maps. Huthi rebels are largely confined to the North, in Sa'da and neighboring governorates and in Sana'a as the capital, although in 2010 Huthis were blamed for kidnapping a senior judge known "for his high character and lack of corruption" in Ibb (BBC 2010). This blame has no backing in surrounding events of that time involving the Huthis. Events initiated by Foreign Security Forces in *figure 5.5* were all airstrikes, by the Saudi Security Forces in Huthi territory and by U.S. Security Forces' predator drones in the desert. Foreigners as targets included ample events in Ma'rib, where many tourists visiting the Ma'rib Dam have been kidnapped or attacked. Islamist and al-Qa'eda activity show no apparent locational trends, but the Islamist activity in the North and near the capital is usually related to Shi'a-Sunni conflict in the North and to political conflict between Islah and the GPC in Sana'a. The secessionist movement is included in all events attributed to Oppositional Parties, which obscures the Southern Movement largely confined to the South, even though most oppositional activity occurred there.

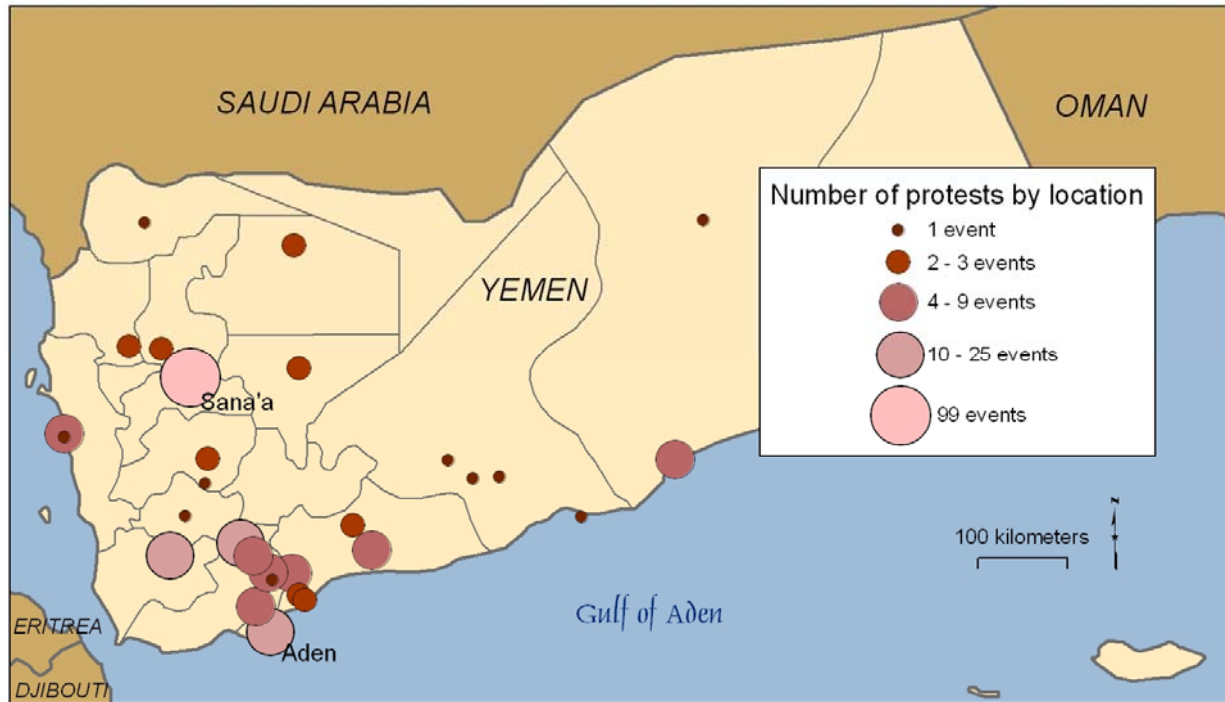
Figure 5.8: Locations of events by event type, 2000-2010



All event types overlapped in the Sana'a and Aden, as can be assumed by the political activity and diversity of interests in the capital and former capital cities. Many other Southern locations housed all event types, which is not characteristic in any cities in the North, East, or West other than Sana'a. Attacks were widely distributed in Yemen, but formed the majority of events in Sa'da, where bombings were the least common. This is because of the frequent attacks of the Huthi on national security forces and vice-versa. Protests were much more prevalent in the South than in any other location, which is discussed below.

Protests, Public Demonstrations, and Riots

Figure 5.9: Protests, 2000-2010



Protests in Yemen were common from 2000-2010, but the types of protests drastically differed in the reasons for and goals of public demonstrations. *Figure 5.9* shows that protests are more common in the South than in the North, aside from the large number in Sana'a. Public protest in relation to the scale of conflict is smallest in the Sa'da region, since the Huthi minorities lack political representation in the central government, and are concentrated in an area far from the capital and government purview, giving them no visibility. More importantly, the Huthi consider central government rule to be illegitimate by their religious demands for a Zaydi imamate, so they refuse to participate on the political terms of the GPC by protesting. Even though the Southern Secessionists also deny Northern rule, the legacy of secular, quasi-democratic political activity in the South produces much wider participation in public political activism. "Because the South used to be

an independent state, opposition leaders there have a readily available framework to mobilise and inspire collective action” (International Crisis Group 2011, 6). Southern towns have witnessed more political activism than all Northern cities except for Sana’a due to the civil society mechanisms in place before unification (Carapico 1998).

Figure 5.10: Protest frequency, violence and casualties

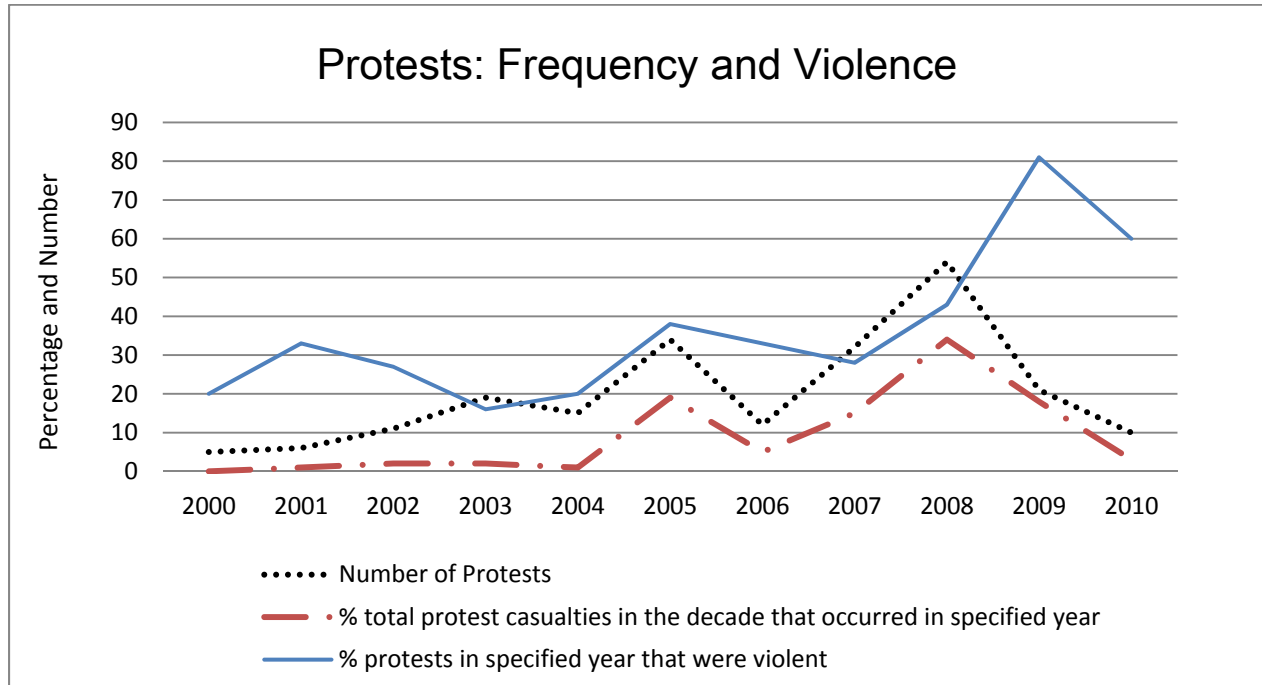
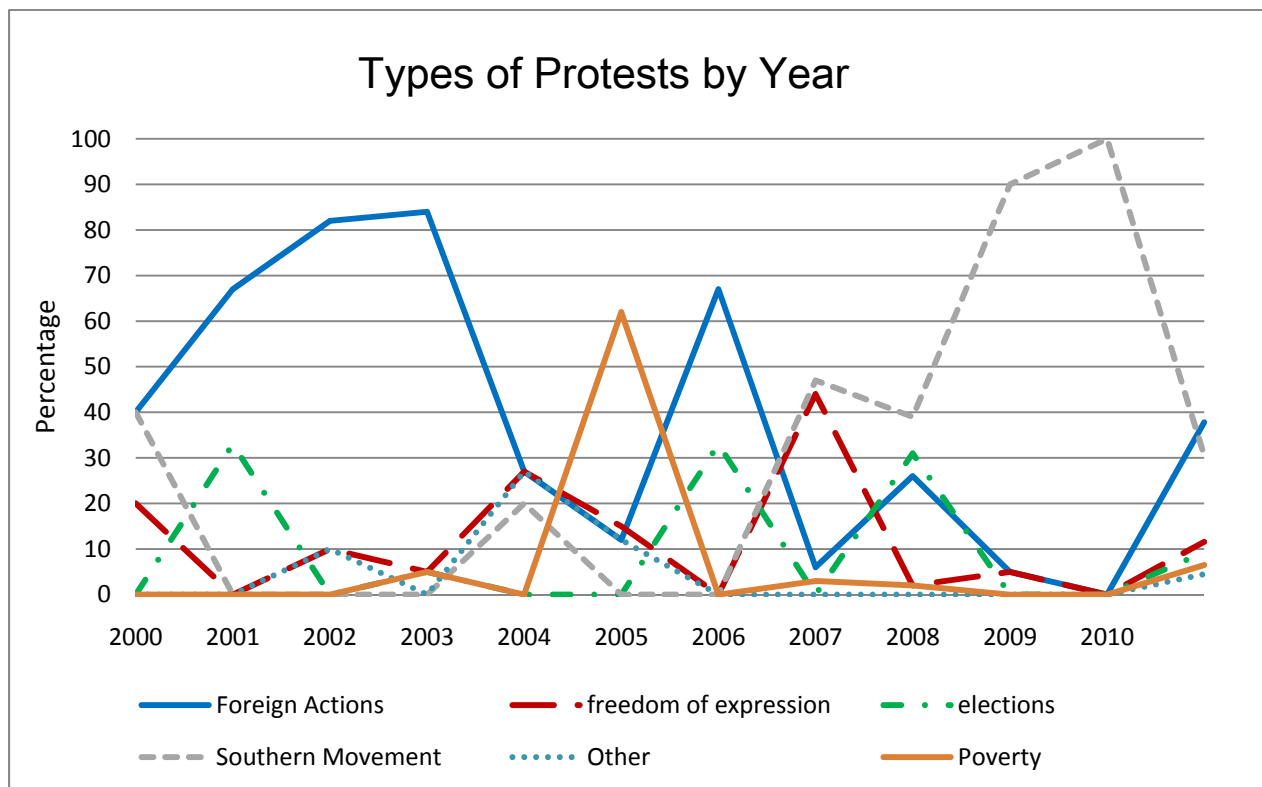


Figure 5.11: Percentage of types of protests per year



From the protests reported, the decade began with a small number of protests, but the percentage of them that became violent was relatively high even though the percentage of casualties in protests in the early years was low (*Figure 5.10*). The spike of protest violence in 2001 was almost completely attributable to election violence, even though the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and Israel were the most common reasons for protests. The domination of protests against foreign actors suggests that these were condoned by, and perhaps even encouraged by, the regime. The regime was not threatened by these protests earlier in the decade so they were for the most part peaceful, but as government compliance with U.S. GWOT efforts emerged, they became more of a threat. In the middle of the decade, protests against the regime (in all the other categories of *Figure 5.11*) became more commonplace. Saleh won reelection in 2006, a year marked by election violence.

In 2005, protesters demonstrated against the enactment of subsidy cuts brought on by continued pressure from the International Monetary Fund after agreements in 1996 for structural adjustment. Expectations of these structural adjustments were that the encouragement of a freer market would create a “trickle-down effect of sustained growth leading to better employment, higher incomes, and a stronger basis for social peace and order after an initial period of adjustment” (Portes and Roberts 2005). The government had delayed adjustment after mass protests in 1997, but continued subsidy cuts in some areas in 2005. The tribal agricultural lobby led significant protests against rising diesel fuel prices, important for farm equipment, hoping to alleviate costs for Northern tribal members who held leverage against the GPC. Decisions for specific subsidy cuts were highly politicized, which explains why the majority of protests outside of Sana’a were concentrated in the South.

The government had long resisted subsidy cuts in order to exploit subsidies for political support, and the World Bank estimated that poverty levels would rise eight percent if subsidies were withdrawn and prices rose to world market levels (al-Arashi 2011). Although total GDP did not fall

and unemployment figures did not rise in these years, Hegre and Sambanis (2006) have found that fluctuating GDP rather than absolute GDP is the “strongest factor affecting a poor, unstable state’s descent into civil war” (Raleigh et al. 2010, 6538; also, see O’Loughlin 2004). The rising prices on fuel and food affected individual livelihoods, putting pressure directly on individuals rather than the country’s GDP.

Southerners expressed more disdain for subsidy cuts due to a perception of discrimination and increasing relative deprivation to Northerners. Since unification, the Northern economy had grown due to the growth of federal activity and control over a larger constituency, but the Southern economy had contracted. When the political center moved to Sana’a, the regime fired all potential dissidents from government service; and unemployment due to military and civil service layoffs skyrocketed in the South. The local economy was severely shocked by the reduced traffic in Yemeni ports after the bombings of the *USS Cole* and *Limburg* in 2001 and 2003.

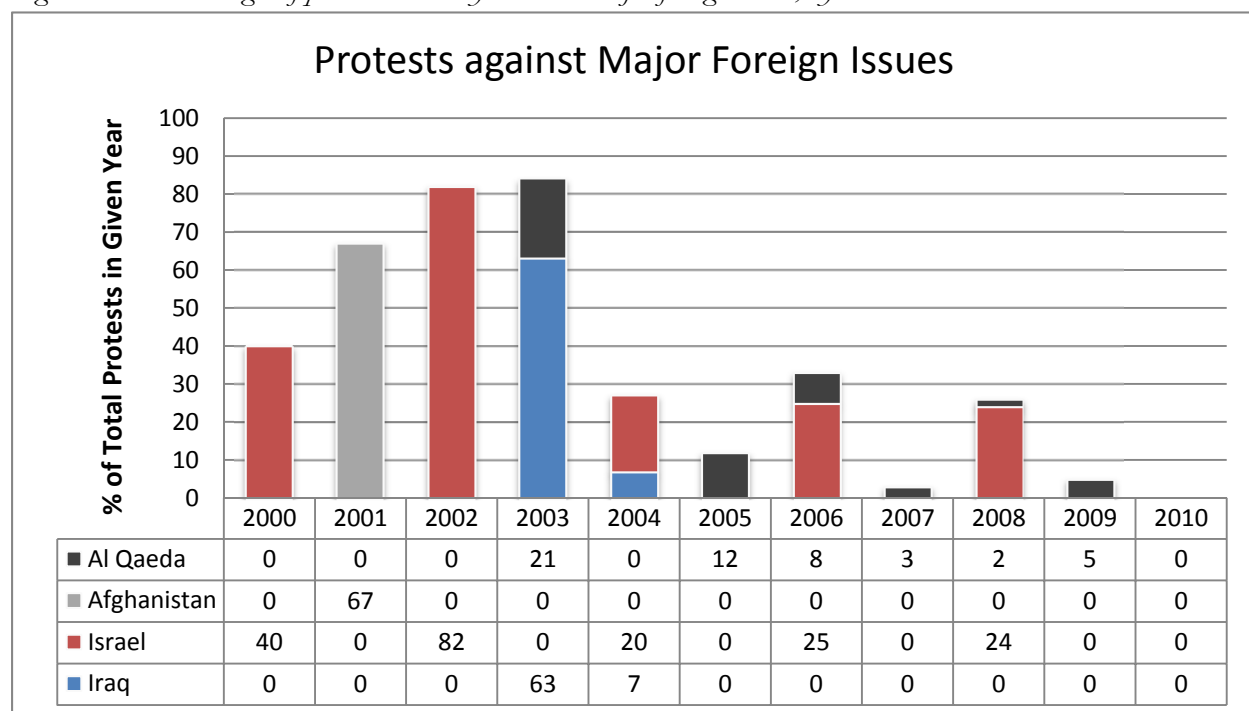
The Southern Movement gained strength after the subsidy cuts in 2005 set a precedent for protest. A Southern sense of entitlement to oil reserves in the South after unification further exacerbated the complaints of rising fuel prices. Deteriorating economic conditions for Southerners strengthened the cause, and former Southern military members led public demonstrations in 2007 to be granted employment in the national armed forces. The Southern Movement protests overtook all other political unrest after 2008, and were the most violent and the most frequent.

The protests against restrictions on the press correspond with the earlier graph (*figure 4.1*) showing decline in the freedom of the press. 2006 showed a significant drop in Yemen’s global percentile rating for press freedoms, and the protests cropping up in 2007 (corresponding to the only year with a higher press freedom score than the previous year) indicate a high level of public awareness and concern for this issue. The success of the protests in 2007 corresponded to a reversal,

albeit temporarily, of press crackdowns, indicating that the government made concessions to the seriousness of the movement and its elevation into international attention. Despite this temporary success of public demonstration, trends for peaceful protests were overshadowed by increasingly violent protests since 2008.

As shown in *figure 5.11*, even though protests increased in the decade, the total number contrasts with the decline of protests against foreign issues as shown below. *Figure 5.11* showed that protests involved with the Southern Movement eclipsed the other categories after 2007, which suggests that a focus on in domestic politics began to override concern over foreign actions.

Figure 5.12: Percentages of protests in each year about major foreign issues, by theme



Low rates of internet usage, high rates of illiteracy, and low subscription to expensive satellite television all contribute to the spread of information in Yemen by state-owned television and by word of mouth. News travels through informal setting such as qat chews. These community settings for receiving knowledge promote a collective stance on issues, and such a collective identity

promotes mobilization (Tilly 1978). Mosque sermons are a powerful means of spreading information to the public, though the state clamped down on the content delivered during sermons at the same time as enacting education reforms to standardize the curriculum of religious schools in accordance to U.S. pressures. With competing influence of religious factions, the state held interest in these changes.

The major protests against Israel corresponded with the beginning of the Second Intifada in 2000 and in 2002 in response to Israel's offensive against the West Bank in March. Note that *figure 5.12* includes only the percentages of protests in each year that were directed against foreign issues, as compared to the total protests in each year shown in *figure 5.10*. Thus, in 2000, only five protests took place (as shown in *figure 5.10*) but forty percent of them (a total of two) were directed against Israeli action (as shown in *figure 5.12*). All protests in 2001 about foreign issues were directed against the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, but only six total protests occurred (four of them about the Afghanistan invasion). Protests doubled in 2003 from the year before, with 85% of them directed against the war in Iraq, which demonstrates a higher amount of mobilization against U.S. War efforts. In 2004, protests were simultaneously directed against the Iraq War and the West Bank wall, though in *figure 5.12* I include most as protests against Israel because the Iraq War protests were more general and ongoing. Protests against Israel revolved around the conflict with Hezbollah in Lebanon in 2006 and with Gaza in 2008. The 2006 Danish cartoon that depicted derogatory images of the Prophet Mohammad incited riots across the Muslim world. I included protests related to that event in *Figures 5.11 and 5.12*, but since they did not fall into the major categories of protests against foreign actions, I omitted them in *Figure 5.12*.

Protests about Al-Qa'eda as a category in *Figure 5.12* refer to outcry against American-led airstrikes in Yemen, detentions both in Europe and America of suspects without trial in the GWOT,

and news of harsh treatment of Guantanamo detainees, where Yemenis has comprised one-fifth of the inmates since 9/11 (Ryan 2007). Protests never openly condoned violent Islamist activity. Protesters typically denounced ill treatment of Yemenis and of Muslims, but also protested against AQ violence as well. In 2007, thousands of Yemeni civilians protested in solidarity with Spaniards after 14 Spanish tourists were killed by an al-Qa'eda cell in 2007 (Deutsche Presse-Agentur 2007).

The Saleh regime allowed and condoned demonstrations about foreign issues early in the decade, closing schools and government offices on protest days, but mobilization later in the decade pushed the limits of the government's toleration. These protests reveal that, despite low rates of education in Yemen and little access to uncensored media, global events have real local impacts. Despite Yemen's low profile in international politics, citizens are concerned with global events regardless of (or perhaps because of) how they receive information and how that information is presented.

It is difficult to tease apart when these protests began to be directed against the regime from media reports, for the propaganda fed by the government to the population obscures the effects and implications of foreign actions.

“Media imply that the world is knowable. However, in a dictatorship, no one knows how many people hate the dictator or would like a radically different interpretation of their religion... The term I like best is structural ambiguity.” (Joris Luyendijk from interview with Kester 2008, 504).

The lack of transparency in the Saleh regime and its control over most news sources allowed President Saleh to conceal cooperation with American air strikes against al-Qa'eda suspects on Yemeni soil so that he could claim the raids as his own (Wikileaks Cable 2010). This tactic never worked well, since a Yemeni newspaper published photos of the predator drones after the attack

even as Saleh was claiming that it was an internal explosion. Once members of the GPC began to defect in 2011, mobilization against the government in the Yemeni Spring truly took hold. Mass mobilization against the GPC gained strength from the support of former government-appointed officials with high-ranking positions, power, and alliances (Steil 2011).

The relation of physical geography to conflict is a major point of focus in strategic geography circles. The mountainous interior and inaccessible desert do not appear to have influence over conflict zones as do the human geography elements of population groups and territorial control. Although al-Qa'eda activity may develop in Eastern desert outposts, it has increased in the South, though activity in the East has been directed against foreign-managed oil companies that operate the pipelines in Hadramawt to the port in al-Mukallah.

Yemen as a very rural and deeply divided country has only somewhat followed the pattern that “locations with high population densities that are furthest from the capital have the highest civil war risk” (Raleigh et al. 2010, 6540). This claim partially contradicts the idea that “Separatist conflicts tend to occur at greater distances from national capitals, and are more likely in sparsely populated regions near the state border, and in territories without significantly rough terrain” (Buhaug and Rød 2006). Both of these ideas suggest that distance from the capital creates more room for conflict, but opposing views of the role of population densities and their effects on civil wars versus separatist conflicts blur the relationships of conflicts in Yemen with population density and distance from the capital.

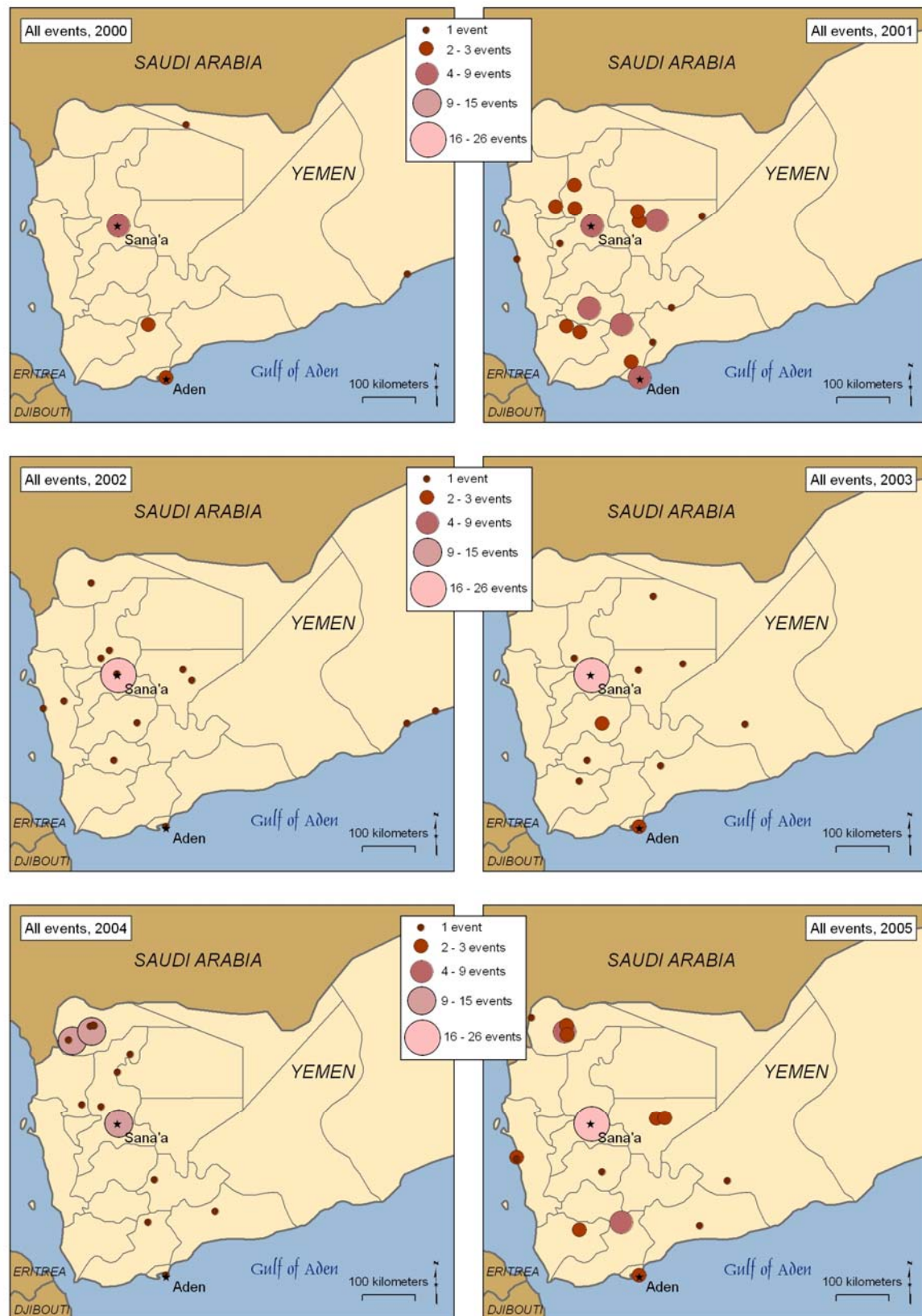
To further complicate theories of the relationship of distance with conflict, Buhaug and Rød (2006) also claim that revolutionary conflict, rather than separatist conflict, is more likely in proximity to the capital and in densely populated areas. The Yemeni Spring movement in Sana'a as a revolutionary conflict, rather than in 'Aden as a separatist conflict incited by the Southern

Movement, supports this theory, even though the Southern Movement and the Yemeni Spring revolution in 2011 have overlapped and blurred the distinction between secession and revolution. Even though most Southerners express revolutionary sentiment, the secessionist movement is still strong due to the fear that a change in the Northern government will not satisfy Southern grievances. The lines between civil war and separatist movements are also fuzzy in the Southern Movement and the Huthi conflict, both of which are roughly equidistant from the capital.

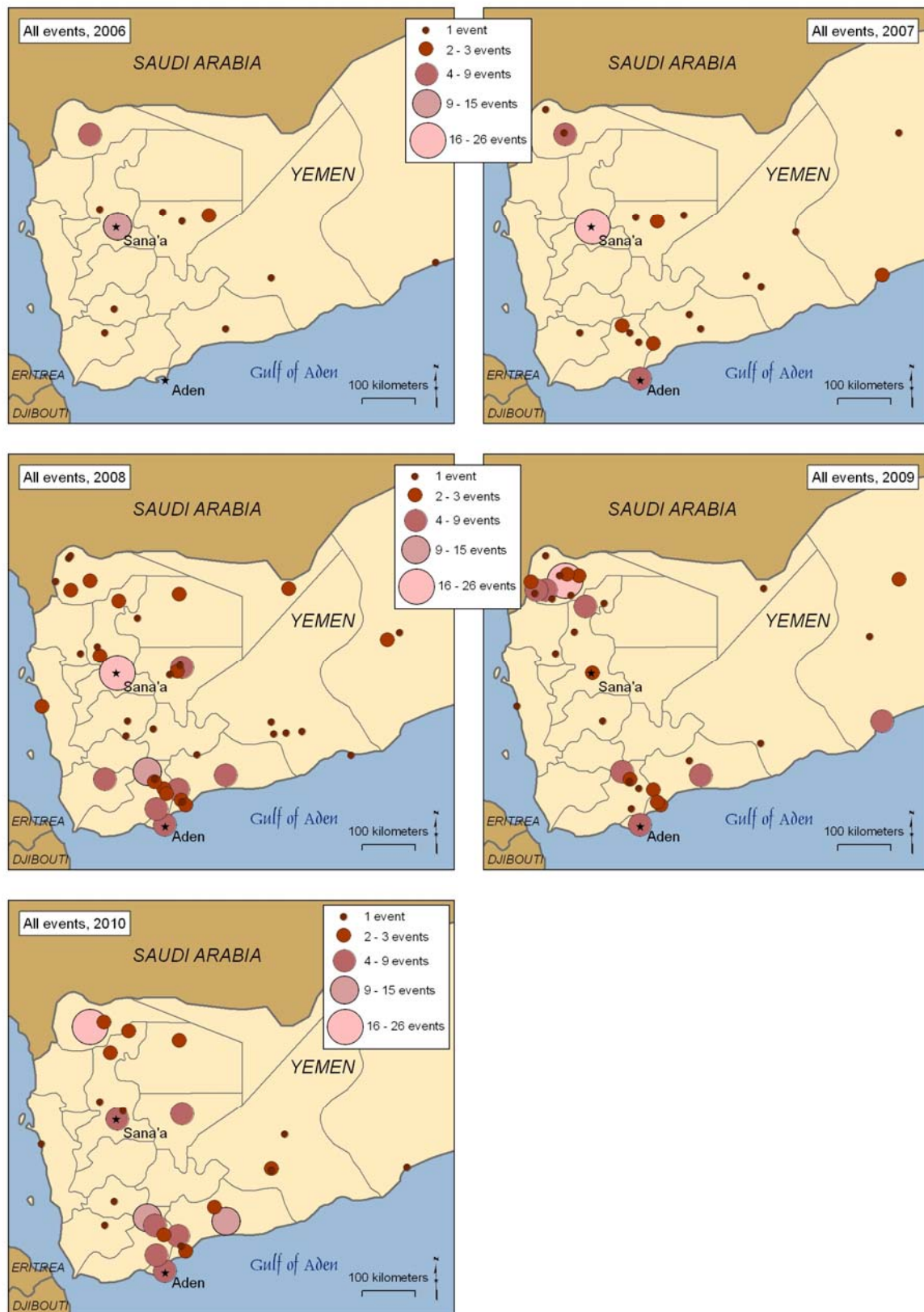
The theories of Raleigh et al. (2010) and Buhaug and Rød (2006) stated above only partially make sense of how distance and density affect conflict in Yemen. The civil war near the state border in Sa'da is in fact occurring in a town with rough terrain and relatively high population density, though it is surrounded by very sparsely populated areas. The separatist movement in the South occurs in the most highly populated regions in terrain that is much more well-connected to the capital by roadways and infrastructure. The religious history of the conflict in the North, however, presents a more nuanced view of the conflict: Sa'da is the center of Zaydism, and even though Zaydi Shi'a live in a wider territory in the Northern governorates, the influence of the Huthi *sayyid* family of religious scholars who claimed ascendancy to the imamate drew support in that area in particular. Sa'da existed as the home of the Huthi long before borders were drawn and before Sana'a became the capital and population center of North Yemen. This historical context overrides claims to geographic determinism, but distance from the capital did allow Huthi support in Sa'da to grow largely unchecked by the regime until the past decade.

Below, the conflicts are mapped by year in order to show changes in conflicts throughout the decade:

Figures 5.13-5.18: Graduated circle maps of violent event counts by location each year, 2000-2005



Figures 5.19-5.23: Graduated circle maps of violent event counts by location each year, 2006-2010



The maps above show that the year 2000 was relatively peaceful in Yemen, but that 2001 was much more violent (refer to *figure 5.1*). The abruptness in violence in 2001 was in large part due to election activity from the first municipal elections held since unification (see *table 5.1*). Terrorist activity also escalated in the areas east of the capital. In 2002 election activity had abated, but single events more widely dispersed throughout the country cropped up and activity in Sana'a increased. There was only moderately more activity in 2003 despite parliamentary elections and an al-Qa'eda prison break. The second wave of unrest (again, see *figure 5.1*) is evident in the eruption of the Huthi conflict in the Sa'da in 2004.

In 2005, the Huthi conflict continued and activity in Aden, Lahej and Ta'izz increased as organized protests against the IMF subsidy cuts. These again abated in 2006, but after 2007 conflict began to proliferate in the South and increased as the Southern Movement came to a fore in 2008. The Southern Movement remained strong and intensified in 2010. The concentration of activity remained in Abyan, al-Dhali', Aden and Lahej, where military layoffs had the most impact on livelihoods.

From 2009-2010, a marked decrease of political contention in the capital is evident. All events moved increasingly to peripheral areas, suggesting that the capital was increasingly more policed so that contentious activity, especially protests (the most common form of activity in the capital), was less possible. An increasing loss of control in the peripheral areas where conflict increased may be an accompanying effect of the reduction of government capability during the later years of the decade.

As for Yemen's physical geography, the rural areas of Hadramawt, al-Mahrah, and al-Jawf appear to have less politically contentious activity, partially because of the nature of the data I collected. Tribal attacks against the government were included, but were identified as attacks by

civilians rather than as explicitly tribal, to avoid distinction between types of tribes and types of civilians. I did not include events of tribal disputes due to the lack of reliable media coverage of these events, and my violent event data shows these areas as peaceful since even if they are home to alleged AQAP desert outposts. Since terrorist attacks occur in populated regions or strategic areas rather than at these desert outposts, the only violent activity that occurs there are air raids and drone attacks.

Locations of covert AQAP desert outposts and desert activity are especially unclear. Because I only cross-checked information with local sources, my search results from using Lexis Nexis missed covert activity such as the 2002 predator drone attack in Ma'rib. Lexis Nexis documented the first covert security operations against AQAP in 2009, when a missile loaded with cluster bombs struck a "remote area 400 miles South of Sana'a" (Yemen Times 2009), which the article estimated to have killed 25 civilians and five AQAP members. The vagueness of this location is unhelpful in mapping its position, and the casualty figures are rough estimates at best, also not drawing a distinction between targets and collateral casualties. At the time of that raid,

"The Yemen campaign [had] not been officially acknowledged by Washington. Instead, the strikes have been deemed a Special Access Program, meaning that there is no requirement that they either be authorized by the president or that Congressional intelligence committees be notified about them. There is debate going on within the White House whether these C.I.A. operations should be deemed an official "covert action," which would allow them to be carried out without the Yemenis' approval" (Yemen Times 2009).

The increase in events in the Eastern desert areas after 2005 occurred mostly in areas of oil production, but were not all due to terrorist activity, nor do they indicate an emergent "resource war". Collier (2000) contends that oil remains the most conflict-inducing resource, and that resource

economies are particularly susceptible to civil war. Even though Yemen operates under an oil-based resource economy (even though profits are low compared to other Middle Eastern oil economies), oil production remains in control of foreign companies and has not been a catalyst for internally-directed violence among local groups.

A few of the violent events near oil facilities have been identified with AQAP attacks on oil pipelines, such as an event in Ma'rib in 2007, in which "the attack was a response to an earlier raid by security forces who killed a senior al-Qaida operative in the area and three other militants" (Associated Press Worldstream 2007). Tribal retaliation for government arrests is commonplace, often apart from any al-Qa'eda based activity. Such events support Le Billon's (2004) links between oil production, poor governance, and terrorism. Many of the events in oil areas, however, occurred in response to non-terrorist related grievances about Yemeni workers' rights in foreign oil firms. For example, in March 2007, a French engineer in the French oil company Total's facilities at Balhaf Port on the Gulf of Aden shore incited riots after throwing a Qu'ran on the floor to offend a Yemeni worker. "Nearly 400 protested, burned cars and trashed offices till police came, when the fatality and injuries occurred" (Agence France Presse 2007a.). In November of the same year, a dispute over jobs in the same area at a Ukrainian oil firm led to sixteen deaths (all Yemeni tribesmen and security forces) and six hostages taken but released after a few hours (Agence France Presse 2007b.). Since this was evidently not part of politically-motivated violence *per se*, I did not include it in my data, but such events may affect local relations with influence of terrorist networks who target Westerners.

Identifying trends in violence by event type puts conflicts into a different perspective. In the figures below, I separate events from 2000-2010 to identify major categories of contention independent of geographic location:

Figure 5.24: Casualties in Major Categories of Contention

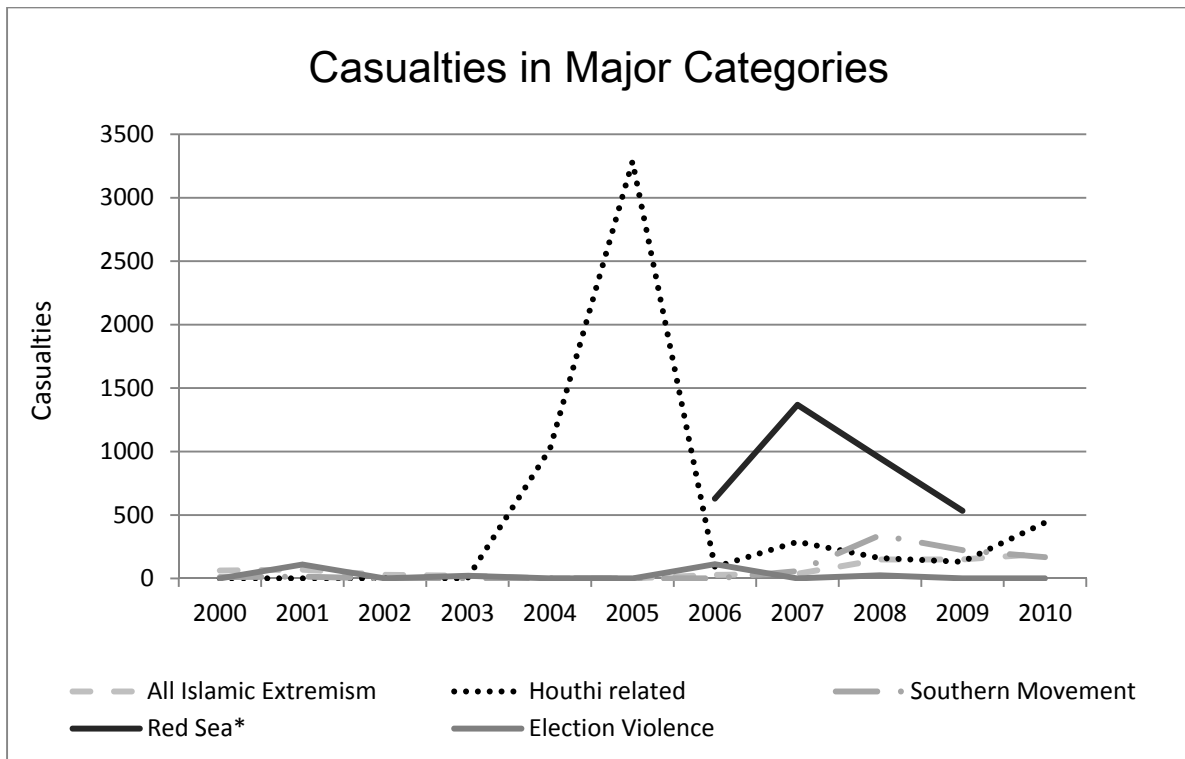


Figure 5.25: Red Sea migrations and casualties

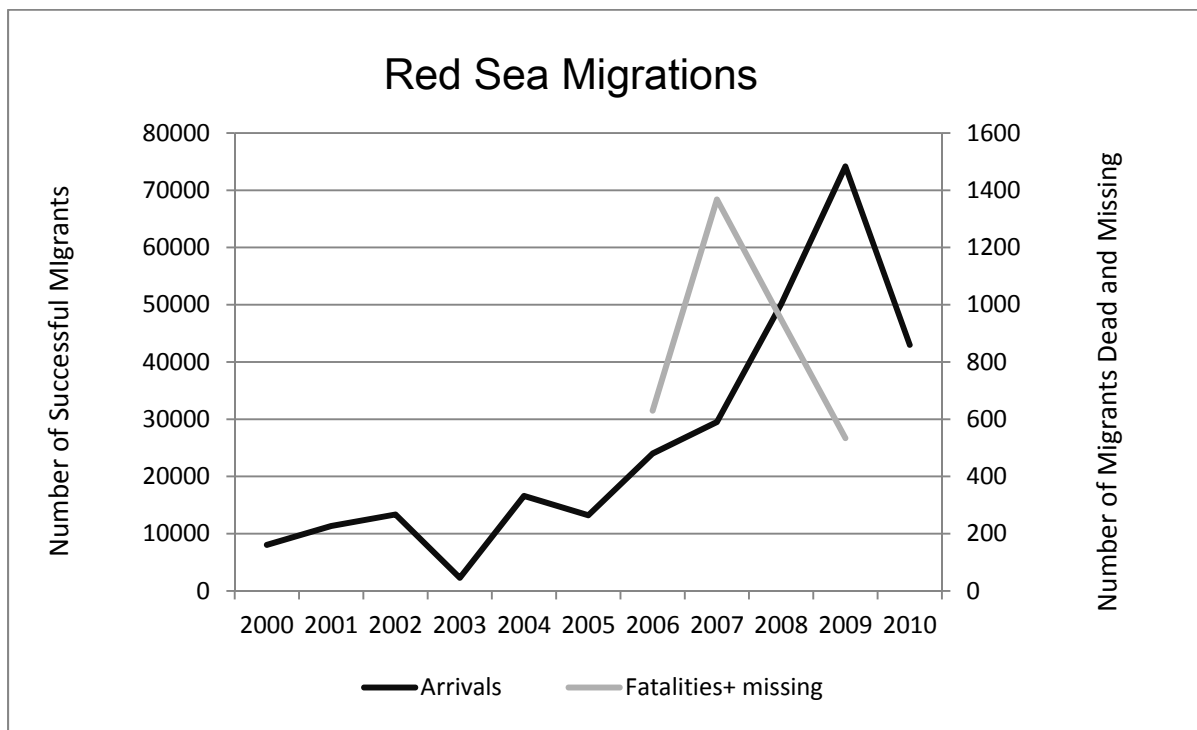


Figure 5.24 clearly shows that the casualties resulting from the Huthi conflict in 2004-2005 far outweighed the casualties of all other categories of contention in the decade. The only steady increase of violence in a single category has been that of Islamic extremism since 2006, though the casualty figures are slight relative to those of the other categories.

The Red Sea migrations stand out as a major category of casualties. I have not included the Red Sea migration casualties of Somalis and Ethiopian refugees in the previous graphs due to the insufficiency of data before humanitarian and media attention turned to this issue in 2006, and also because these casualties do not fall under my criteria of politically contentious events. They do, however, reveal an underlying political relationship between the Yemeni state and those in the Horn of Africa where the migrants originate from. Most of the casualties result from response to the Yemeni coast guard: either in taking risky routes to avoid patrollers or in smugglers dumping the migrants when approached. These migrants also have implications on Yemen's politics and demography, and will continue to be an issue that the new regime must address due to the sheer numbers of migrants within Yemen, most of whom are poor, unemployed, mistrusted, and discriminated against (Jureidini 2010).

The U.S. creation of a Yemeni Coast Guard for counterterrorism has incited criticism, especially in light of casualty reports of Red Sea migrants. Healy and Hill (2010) assert that the growing concern of links between Somali and Yemeni terrorism are unfounded both by publicly available material and anecdotal information, and that population movements across the Gulf of Aden have not demonstrated any links with terrorist activity. Andrew Knight, UNHCR spokesperson in Yemen, also said in 2010: "Until today we have absolutely no evidence of any link between refugees and terrorists" (Murdock 2010). Increased security measures and border controls

to prevent illegal entry have increased the risks and costs for smugglers and crossers alike (Jureidini 2010).

“The dilemma is that increasing the risk of arrest and punishment of smugglers can lead to the further victimization of the people who they are smuggling. Notoriously, when the Yemeni government began to apprehend the boat smugglers (even though given relatively low fines and/or short term prison sentences), smugglers began to abandon their passengers to avoid arrest in Yemeni waters, sometimes in deep seas off the coast of Yemen, and many hundreds have been drowned trying to get to shore. This practice continues today” (Jureidini 2010, 7).

I did not include the Red Sea data from the graphs in *Figures 5.1-5.3* because they do not reflect politically contentious events in Yemen *per se*, and were not included in the maps provided in this chapter because they occurred offshore and in locations unavailable in scant media reportage. They do, however, impact Yemen’s demographics and politics, both internally and with international counterterrorist concerns, though the representation of this refugee population is largely absent both domestically and abroad. *Figure 5.24* puts these casualties into perspective, however. From 2006-2010, UNHCR reports suggest that the numbers of deaths related to crossings overshadow the violence of all other types of violence in Yemen other than the Huthi movement.

Although UNHCR casualty figures from Red Sea migrant crossings are not available from 2000-2005, *Figure 5.25* shows a correlation between successful arrivals and casualties once those data began to be collected in 2006. Not surprisingly, more casualties accompanied more attempted crossings, but the offset arrivals and casualties lines of *Figure 5.25* show that rates of documented casualties fell despite increased numbers of successful crossings after 2006. The high numbers of casualties documented in 2006 drew much greater attention to this issue than ever before, which suggests that crossings and casualties may have far exceeded documentation before 2006. The

discrepancy of 170,000 UNHCR-registered Somalis in Yemen versus the Yemeni government's estimation of two million Somalis in Yemen (Healy and Hill 2010) support this claim.

The reduction in crossings and casualties after 2006 demonstrates the effects of increased humanitarian response and international attention to the issue. UNHCR authorities working from departure points on the African coast have created campaigns to inform potential migrants of the dangers of the crossings and grim prospects upon arrival in Yemen, especially after the closure of the Saudi border that prevents migrants from continuing to the Persian Gulf in search of employment.⁴ Interviews and reports suggest that many migrants are willing to attempt the crossings no matter how grim the prospects (IRIN 2011), and that they are aware of “limited availability of food, shelter, resettlement and employment opportunities” (Jureidini 2010, 8). UNHCR officials have also worked with the Yemeni Coast Guard and Yemeni Officials to train them for better response to these migrants (UNHCR 2009).⁵ Healy and Hill (2010) attribute the reduced numbers of crossings to the closure of the Saudi border due to Huthi conflict in the Sa'da region, where the most accessible border crossings are.

The large numbers of African migrants in Yemen has incited an active campaign in the Yemeni government to rescind the obligations of the 1951 UN Refugee Convention, complaining that refugees import disease, crime, and poverty (Murdock 2010). No laws have yet been changed, but in 2009 the Yemeni government threatened to deport any refugees not registered in a national database or through UNHCR (Jureidini 2010). In 2011 many Yemeni officials began to claim that

⁴ No Persian Gulf countries are signatories to the 1951 Refugee Convention that would require them to accept incomers as refugees (Jureidini 2010).

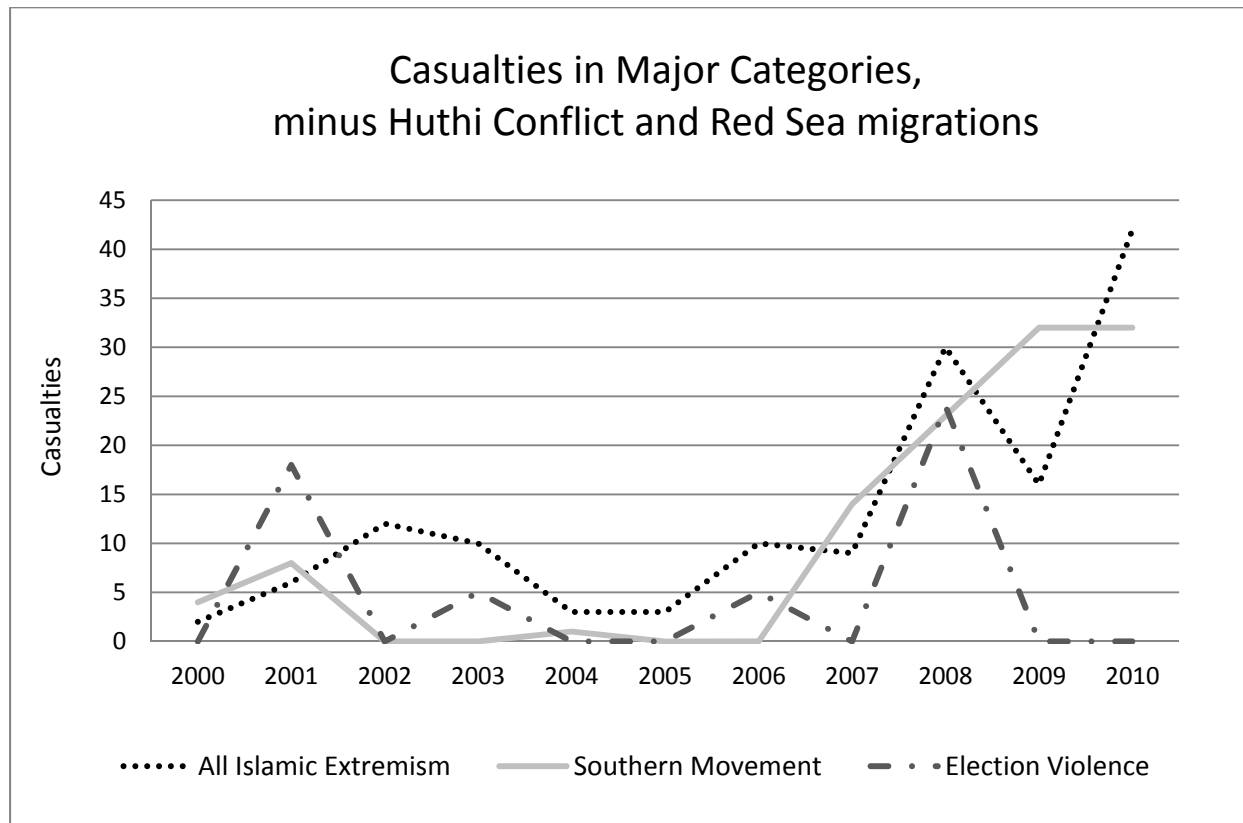
⁵See IRIN 2011 and the Mixed Migration Task Force website at <http://www.mmyemen.org/news> for a list of activities, trainings and workshops coordinated for local officials, aid workers, and security forces confronting migrants in Yemen.

the incomers should be classified as voluntary economic migrant workers, which would rescind their legal status as refugees and remove their right to reside in Yemen without a proper visa and work permit. This is particularly the case for Ethiopian migrants in Yemen (Jureidini 2010). The regime change and political upheaval due to the Yemeni Spring in addition to compounding poverty levels and increasing numbers of Yemeni internally displaced peoples will affect the refugee situation, though in ways yet unforeseen.

Violent Islamist Movements

Resistance expressed in protests can be telling about themes that gather the most public negative opinion, which may correspond to directions in terrorist activity. All of the protests identified in *Figure 5.11* had overlapped with anti-American or anti-Western to some extent, but the decrease in protests about foreign issues over the course of the decade negatively corresponds to the increase in terrorist activity. This may imply that protests moved from public, peaceful demonstrations to violent, targeted attacks. It may also indicate the censorship of protests of any kind that the government could curb, which did not include the Southern Movement protests shown in *Figure 5.11*. It also suggests that terrorist activity began to be directed inward, towards domestic rather than foreign affairs, perhaps as the government began to be perceived as more corrupt and as its secular stance became more criticized by those inciting Islamist violence.

Figure 5.26: Casualties in Major Categories, minus Huthi Conflict and Red Sea Migrations

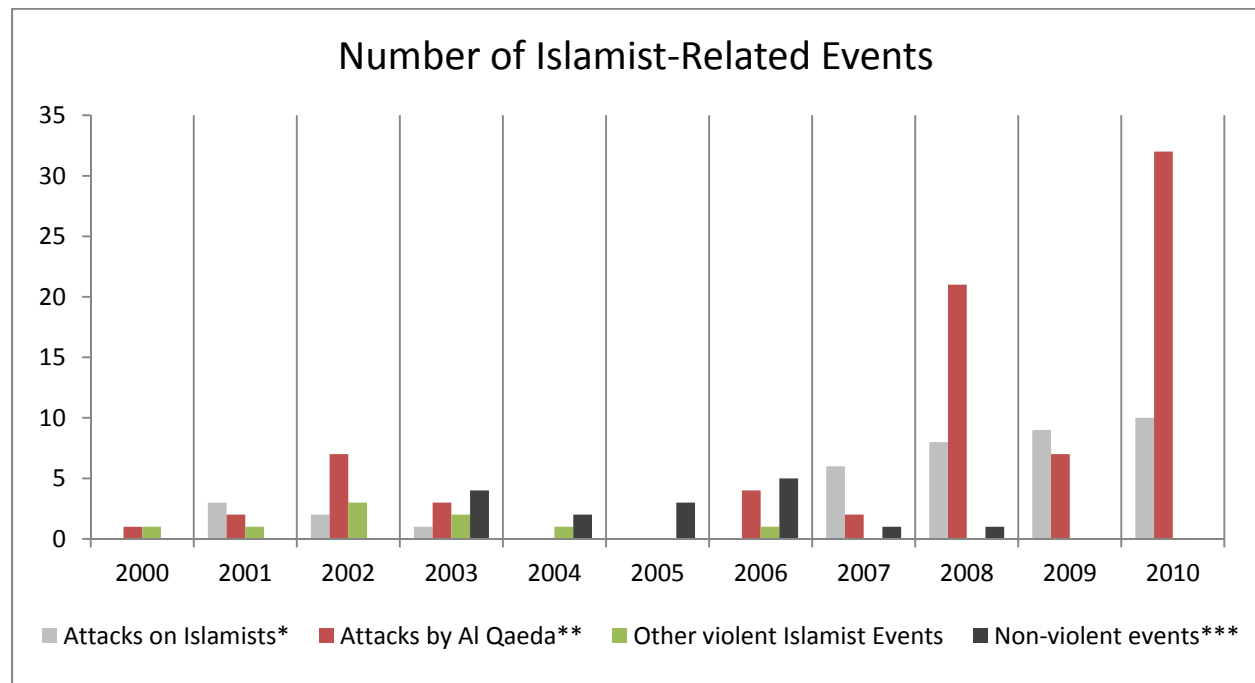


The graph in *Figure 5.24* showed all violent events in the decade, separated into major categories of contention. In *Figure 5.26*, I removed the Huthi conflict and Red Sea migration events since they overshadowed the casualties in other categories and obscured the trends in Islamic extremism, the Southern Movement, and election violence. I categorized oppositional political activity in the South as the “Southern Movement”, even though it was not a cohesive, public opposition campaign at the time. *Figure 5.21* reveals show only a moderate correlation between Southern political opposition casualties and election violence in 2001, before the Southern Movement was openly calling for secession and before activity increased in the middle of the decade, somewhat independent of the trends in election violence and Islamic extremism.

The correlation between Islamic extremism and election violence, however, is clear after 2004, which shows that election years were not just important for party and voting violence. There are several possible explanations behind the cause of this correlation. “Islamic extremism” is not limited to AQ activity, and it is possible that more Islamists incited more casualties during election years. (Note that Islah-related political activity in particular was coded as election violence, not as Islamic extremism, since not all Islah activity is Islamist, and relatively little Islah activity overlaps with terrorism and violence.) If an event did not include politicians or obvious Islah-based anti-GPC activity but related to any Islamist group, then I coded it as Islamic extremism.)

Another explanation is that the government could have claimed that more Islamist violence occurred in these years, or attributed more events to extremist activity, in order to triumph over the threats of extremism and to demonstrate the government’s efficacy in dealing with these threats. The last explanation is that the government may have incited casualties among Islamist groups in election years, and in covering up its perpetration of these acts, could gain support for having cracked down on extremist groups, gaining legitimacy for its moderately secular governance (relatively speaking). Burrowes and Kasper (2007) stand by this explanation, giving examples of French tourist kidnappings in 2006 ten days before the elections, and they were released the day after the election, or of YSF arrests of AQ members in the capital who were planning alleged attacks in Sana’a and at Ma’rib oil facilities. In these ways, AQ crackdowns and foiled suicide bombing attacks “allowed President Saleh to play the security and stability cards” (Burrowes and Kasper 2007, 264).

Figure 5.27: Number of Islamist- related events



*Islamists include al-Qa’eda, the Aden-Abyan Islamic Army, Islah, and any group associated with “Islamic Extremism”, though Islah was rarely involved in violent extremism. Violence involving Islah was categorized under election violence when applicable, so that most Islah-related violence was not labeled as Islamist violence.

** I use the term “al-Qa’eda” to include any al-Qa’eda any branch or affiliation, not differentiating before and after the official formation of AQAP. I applied the label to any suspicion of al-Qa’eda connection to an event written a news report. I intentionally over-attribute the label because, even by doing this, evidence of al-Qa’eda activity is scant (see Figure 5.26).

***Non-violent events include protests such as those against government policies directed towards Islamists, against Guantanamo detentions and the treatment of terrorist suspects abroad, and once in 2007 to show solidarity with the Spanish after tourists were killed by al-Qa’eda in Hadramawt.

Islamist-related events increased from 2000-2010, most notably al-Qa’eda related activity (in which I included all suspicion of al-Qa’eda activity) and attacks against Islamists, namely by the YSF, with or without American support. Other violent Islamist events declined throughout the decade, which may indicate one of three things: that these events actually declined; that they were absorbed into al-Qa’eda-related activity, or that they were increasingly attributed to al-Qa’eda activity.

A high-profile jailbreak occurred in 2006, (see *table 5.1*) when 23 militants, ten of whom had been held in relation to the *USS Cole* bombing, dug themselves out of a high-security prison, likely with collusion of the guards though the government denied this allegation (Terrill 2011). Although 2006 witnessed little violence, the increase of AQ activity in subsequent years led to overly attributing the increased presence of AQ to this jailbreak (Terrill 2011). A lesser known jailbreak had also occurred in 2003, where ten suspected AQ members including 2 from the *USS Cole* attack escaped, which discredits overdue causation of the 2006 jailbreak on increased AQ activity after 2007.

The formal creation of AQAP in 2009, when the Yemeni and Saudi al-Qa'eda branches merged under the leadership of Nasir al-Wuhayshi, occurred in the midst of the increased AQ activity in Yemen even though only moderate AQ-incited violence occurred in 2009. As shown in the figures below, the AQAP merger may have gained strength in response to increased YSF attacks on its activities. An alternative view could suggest that as the government began to lose credibility both internally and abroad late in the decade, more events may have been attributed to AQAP than actually occurred, since the increase of Islamist activity in the restless South could be condemned when identified as AQAP activity rather than as anti-regime movements. "Some Southern Movement activists already maintain that raids against al-Qa'eda are used as cover to arrest members of their own movement who have nothing to do with the AQAP terrorists" (Terrill 2011, 60).

Figure 5.28: Yearly totals of casualties of specific groups related to violent Islamist activity

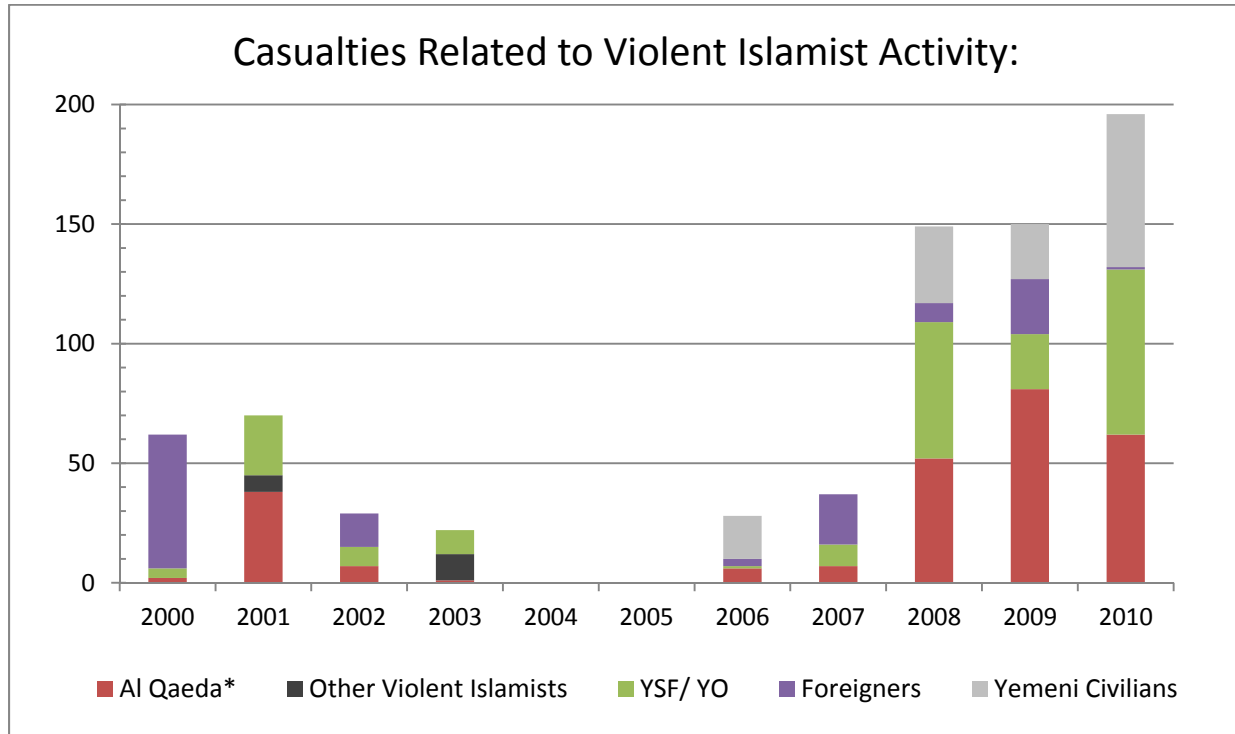
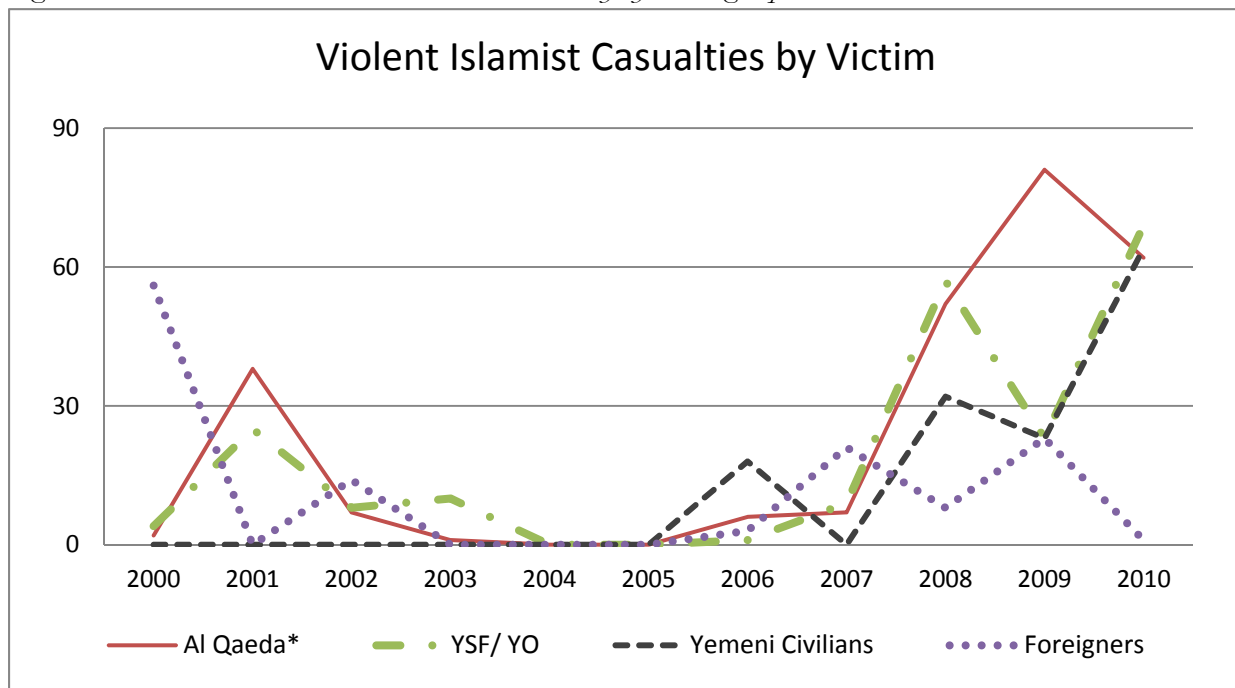


Figure 5.29: Casualties related to violent Islamist activity by victim group



* I use the term “al-Qa’eda” to include any al-Qa’eda any branch or affiliation, not differentiating before and after the official formation of AQAP. I applied the label to any suspicion of al-Qa’eda connection to an event written a news report even if this overly attributes violence to AQ.

Violent Islamist activity has been increasing, but it has also increasingly been affecting local populations. *Figures 5.24 and 5.25* do not show who instigated attacks, and civilian casualties includes not just those harmed by terrorist activity, but also those who suffered as collateral damage in raids on AQAP cells. Civilian support for al-Qa'eda is likely to be met with resistance so long as casualties continue to increase.

Foreigners were almost all the victims earlier in the decade, almost all due to the seventeen Americans killed and forty wounded in the *USS Cole* bombing in 2000. The spike in AQ casualties in 2001 resulted from punitive measures by the YSF in response to that bombing. YSO/YSF casualties tended to spike during increased AQ casualties, both as a response to terrorist activity and as a cause of terrorist crackdowns that resulted in casualties on both sides. After relative calm in the middle of decade (despite being in the height of the GWOT), violent activity increased in numerous small-scale attacks in 2006 and 2007.

Foreigner casualties declined in the decade, in part due to the smaller numbers of foreigners in Yemen. (I used the category of “foreigners” in my data to also include any locals who accompanied foreigners as drivers or guards when they were victims of attacks or kidnappings.) The violence against foreigners in 2007 suggested increasing unrest, and even after non-essential American personnel were evacuated in 2008 after an attack on the American embassy, foreigner (mostly European) casualties increased in 2009, indicating strong anti-Western sentiment despite relatively little foreign presence on Yemeni soil.

Chapter Six: Conclusions and Looking Forward

This thesis has shown how ideas of securitization have changed globally and nationally during a decade of counterterrorism operations. It presents background context to many challenges that the new Yemeni regime will face after the increasingly contentious decade from 2000-2010. Counterterrorism operations continue to be the ultimate concern of international policy with the United States, but for Yemenis, the Huthi rebellion, the Southern Movement, and the Red Sea migrations affect far more lives and are much more pressing issues. Cooperation in the GWOT has altered the sovereignty of the Yemeni state, strengthened its militarization, and placed more power in the hands of the central government to the detriment of much of its population. The international community has largely overlooked ill effects of U.S.-funded counterterrorism on Yemeni economy, politics, and society. The Yemeni Security Forces have also been blamed for abandoning human rights in the name of security (Amnesty International 2010).

I. Impacts of the Yemen Spring

The Yemen Spring has succeeded in ousting Saleh, though whether he will continue to rule from the sidelines as his former vice president takes the presidency is yet to be seen. ‘Abd Rabu Mansur Hadi, now the elected president as a result of the single-candidate election in February 2012, faces high and deeply fractured expectations from the Yemeni population. Emerging as a weak leader, the potential for the revolution to continue against him when he cannot satisfy the requests of the population remains high.

The Yemeni Spring began with hopes of a united opposition to the Saleh regime that would bring together Yemenis for the creation of a more inclusive, more democratic, more representative state. If Hadi does not assert himself as a reformer, the Ahmar forces will likely continue to battle

the military forces, which remain headed by Saleh's family members (Kasinof 2012). Even though Hadi is a Southerner with family members prominent in the Southern Movement, he is seen by many Southerners as a traitor rather than a Southern sympathizer, since he defected from the Southern forces to join Saleh's side in the 1994 civil war (Johnson 2012).

The Joint Meeting Parties (JMP) mobilized the Yemen Spring in its early stages by creating a platform for collective anti-GPC grievances and aims of the revolution in its early stages. The continued existence of the JMP has been a surprise, since had been formed as a marriage of convenience in 2005 to unite the YSP, Islah, and other small political parties in order to create a meaningful opposition to the GPC's monopolization of power. "The ability of Islah and the YSP to stay together and act largely as one seems mostly a function of the marginalization of the extremes and the final ascendance of the pragmatists and moderates in both parties, those committed to the compromises and bargaining involved in playing parliamentary politics" (Burrowes and Kasper 2007, 272). The JMP nevertheless represented the opposition in May, when the GCC finalized the initiative for Saleh's transition out of power. It was when Saleh balked after signing this initiative that fighting broke out between the GPC and the Ahmar family that only ceased after an assassination attempt injured Saleh on June 3, 2011 (Steil 2011).

The Yemeni Spring came to a head after increasing unrest and the geography of the Yemeni revolution followed "previously established patterns of government inclusion/exclusion" (O'Loughlin and Raleigh 2008, 6541). The mass movement of unified protesters in the North was surprising based on the more strongly established patterns of mobilization in the South. Unifying the movements of all Arab countries under the Arab Spring conceals internal complexities of each country's reasons for contention, and obscures how securitization in Yemen has been affected by political participation in the GWOT.

Within a few months the revolution began to splinter, revealing irreconcilably different aims among the Socialists, the Islamists and the Northerners. Many fear that the revolution is in danger of exacerbating these divisions rather than unifying Yemenis around a system of governance that will equally and justly serve all constituents' demands. Steil (2011), however, shows some optimism for unified change, demonstrated in the encampments in Change Square (formerly University Square) in Sana'a, where Sunni and Shi'a Muslims, secularists, and women all participated side by side.

In response to foreign fears that the uprising will lead to the rise of Islamists to power, Southerners argue that whether the South becomes an independent state or develops more of a presence in the central government, the outcome will be a more moderate regime. Despite the JMP operating as the voice of Southern opposition, the political parties under its umbrella maintain opposition to one another, especially between the YSP and Islah, divided between conservative and leftist views as well as Islah's relatively Northern orientation (International Crisis Group 2011). The GPC has must more of a legacy of cooperation with Islamist groups, from the time that former mujahideen were recruited to fight for the North in the civil war of 1994 till concessions that Americans have blamed Saleh for in the GWOT. Although the Islamist party Islah holds a large number of Southern constituents, many Southerners still resent Islah for sacking areas of Aden after the 1994 Civil War, and are wary of its close ties to the GPC until it became an oppositional party in 1997 (International Crisis Group 2011). Southerners claim that if the South obtains increased representation in the emergent regime after Saleh steps down or is removed from power, that they will bring a more moderate brand of politics to the table than would Islah, which appears as though it is gathering influence. Southerners are concerned that the outcome of the Yemeni Spring will be the same as that in 1994, where the GPC and Islah dominated politics as convenient bedfellows, both without Southern influence or much adherence (International Crisis Group 2011, 7).

In its 2011 report, the International Crisis Group offered two possible trajectories of the revolution: immediate separation of the South or the creation of a federation of the North and South states, or of roughly five states, a solution that would appeal to pro-unity and pro-autonomy movement alike. This would incorporate the “lawless” tribal regions into the government structure to build a more inclusive system that would help to negotiate the violence and strengthen influence against al-Qa’eda. Most Yemeni observers believe that a unified government must incorporate or represent as many of the major political parties as possible (Steil 2011). The takeover of Southern towns by AQAP (most notably the city of Zinjibar, capital of Abyan governorate) has changed those potential outcomes, and competing factions and goals have since weakened the Yemeni Spring’s initial strength in collective action.

II. The Future of Terrorism in Yemen

Capacity for state terrorism has increased for other allies and tactics in the GWOT. State-led counterterrorist operations such as airstrikes with necessary “collateral damage” when civilians are also killed could be called state terrorism; Chomsky (2001) argues that the only difference rests upon state approval. “Power lies in the narratives that maintain an organization's own definition of the problem” (Mosse 2005, 8).

Yemen’s position as a U.S. ally in the GWOT subjects it to responsibilities such as the agreement to comply with U.S. military actions that “attack and deal extra-judiciously against presumed fundamentalist terrorists on Yemeni territory” (Mahdi, Wurth, and Lackner 2007, xx). “What matters primarily here is not a vocabulary of moral argument or the conscience of the virtuous warrior but the existence of an independent institutional structure that has the ability to set

a legal process” (Asad 2007, 22). Undermining judicious action, or creating new ones such as detention centers and military tribunals that try terrorist suspects, sets a dangerous precedent for state terrorism. This potential for abuse of the U.S.-Yemeni partnership has been exacerbated by the fact that U.S. intelligence information is disproportionately available to the government, which strengthens it in all dimensions, not just in its ability to combat terrorist threats. State counterterrorism efforts can be more effectively concealed because the state controls wider resources and more sophisticated intelligence that lends greater capability for large-scale action, suppression, and erasure of events from the public eye. Despite a rhetorical shift in the 2010 U.S. National Security Strategy report—one with a clearer definition of the aims behind counterterrorism efforts (no longer called a war on terror), prohibition of torture, and calls for swift justice rather than lengthy detentions—the tactics of the war remained the same, and covert operations like drone attacks have only increased in Pakistan, Somalia, and Yemen.

Rhetoric of freedom as an important component to reduce terrorist actors in the GWOT has fallen out of favor due to the fear that many more people would join the jihad if free to do so, and is also shown in the fear of recidivism for incarcerated terrorists freed after completing their long prison sentences (Shane 2011). The thousands of Yemenis who fought in Afghanistan and the hundreds who spent years in Guantanamo, many of whom no longer hold ties to al-Qa’eda, must reckon with reintegration in an impoverished country in which the U.S. still carried out operations. This calls into question the ‘just international punishment’ of U.S. operations abroad “partly as punitive responses to the 9/11 attacks... these military actions contain a punitive ethos, one that has come dangerously close to vengeance” (Lang 2008, 493).

Counterterrorist measures fall short of addressing many factors that may be pushing people to protest the system in which they live, namely the so-called democratic state whose structure was

supposed to mimic that of “Western” government. Despite these goals of foreign aid allotment in countering terrorism, foreign counterterrorist measures that have led to a heightened focus on security have “contributed to increasing militarization that undermines development, contradicts the democratization process, and threatens the social equilibrium” (Bonnefoy and Detalle 2010, 128).

The fear of AQAP expanding into Huthi regions, or allying with local groups like the Southern movement against the central government, is unlikely, but AQAP expansion in the South has been a growing concern. Eight cities have been taken over by AQAP as of January 2012 (Roggio 2012). The Southern Movement in particular has shunned al-Qa’eda from its political discourse, and touts a more secular brand of politics as a product of its Marxist political legacy. The ambiguity of al-Qa’eda activity gives room for speculation of its aims and operations from the government, the Western security community, and the press. Healy and Hill (2010) suggest that al-Qa’eda attacks on Yemeni Security Forces are highly underreported in foreign media, but are on the rise and pushing away local support. AQAP expansion seems likely to be resisted if civilian casualties related to AQAP presence continue to increase and if the Southern Movement remains a powerful voice in the South.

As early as the late 1990s, resistance to Salafi fundamentalism in Yemen became a public issue when The Sunni rose up against returned mujahideen who attacked the tombs of Shafi’i saints in the South (Ismail 2000). AQAP has the strongest support in Abyan, Shabwa and Hadramawt, though has some presence in Aden and Lahej (International Crisis Group 2011). Its potential to absorb local militant groups has worried the local, national and international community. Even though militants took over the already restless capital city of Lahij governorate, Zinjibar, in 2011, many claim that the government ceded this territory to militants in order to scare international groups into continuing to support the regime because of its cooperation with counterterrorism efforts (International Crisis Group 2011). The participation of al-Qa’eda representatives in this

conflict is still unclear, but it is more likely politically motivated by the trend of the Southern Movement, and “the traditional Salafi insistence on unity of the umma (Islamic community) is inherently at odds with the secessionist movement” (Phillips 2010, 10), since the Southerners who continue to support the YSP tout a (relatively) secular brand of socialism.

If al-Qa’eda does expand into existing conflict areas, it likely will not happen unopposed. The interests of al-Qa’eda often counter those on the ground, and Salafi aims contradict moderate democratic governance. In 2010, AQAP issued a press release declaring jihad on the Shi’a population, claiming Huthi crimes against Sunni Muslims in the North that included displacement from the war, and followed this release with twin car bombings in November 2010 (al-Rodaini 2011). Conflicts of interest and ideological divisions between AQAP, the Huthis, tribes and the government will only increase if Salafi fundamentalism spreads, though in the short term Phillips (2010) anticipates that al-Qa’eda will gain traction from exploiting local groups’ grievances against central government authority. The fear that the Yemeni Spring will create anarchic areas or Islamist rule and thus provide a wider space for AQAP activity seems unlikely.

III. Concluding Remarks

The GWOT has differed from previous wars, both in targeting an enemy that is beyond a sovereign state, and in utilizing new technologies of warfare. The use of predator drones in particular presents new ethical and tactical decisions in warfare, and the United States must face the gravity of the precedent it is setting with this new technology. These tactical changes in warfare present new dilemmas within security discourse and practice on the global, national, and individual scales, but these are presented within a hegemonic discourse that obscures the dangers of hasty

strategic implementation of security policy. The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) in December 2011 issued a report cautioning the acceptance of aerial surveillance, which would not only change warfare but normal privacy in everyday life as well (Stanley and Crump 2011). In February 2012, the ACLU sued the U.S. Department of Justice under the Freedom of Information Act for disclosure about the targeted killings of three American citizens (Anwar al-Awlaki and his son, both dual American/Yemeni citizens, and Samir Khan) on Yemeni soil in 2011 (ACLU 2012).

The spread and distribution of current conflicts will continue to affect local populations for years after the Yemeni Spring. The trajectory of the Huthi conflict and Southern Movements in particular will depend on the political stance of a new regime. Hundreds of thousands have been displaced in Yemen from the Yemeni Spring, the Huthi conflict and Red Sea migrations. The impacts of civil war-type violence, even if a full-blown civil war does not occur, continue to be destructive to the internal structure of the state, and “are typically more destructive of life and property than interstate wars, partly because international structures and rules are either unavailable or ignored” (O’Loughlin 2004, 85). A new Yemeni regime which will come to power facing a looming humanitarian disaster (Steil 2011), which will present major challenges to retaining support from the Yemeni population.

Despite trends identified by sociological, political, and media data, local stances and positions are still important and cannot be identified by country-wide studies. Although many humanitarian response and state building are often “decided upon at the highest levels of international affairs... the local context of implementation is central to the success or failure of efforts at postwar reconstruction, state building, and population return, the local context of implementation of geopolitical decisions” (Dahlman and Ó Tuathail 2005, 645). Since Yemen is so diverse, smaller-scale studies of the types of conflict discussed in this thesis, especially those drawing upon ethnographic accounts, are needed to better explain and understand Yemeni issues. These

perspectives better illuminate relationships between the Yemeni regime and segments of the population to reveal notions of inclusion, exclusion, and reasons for mobilization. Localizing geopolitics by grounding perspectives in fieldwork (Ó Tuathail 2010) will be especially pertinent in measuring the efficacy of a new Yemeni regime.

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